

ADELAIDE

AND

THEODORE.

LETTER I.

The Count de Roseville to the Baron.

YOU cannot imagine, my dear Baron, the pleasure your letter gave me, I am really flattered by what M. d'Aimeri tells you of my young Prince; for it is indirect praise alone that can make an impression. M. d'Aimeri is particularly surpris'd at his attention, and ease of expression. You know how I taught him to speak, and that he contracted this habit in his plays and amusements. As to his activity, he owes that principally to some little care of mine: when I arriv'd here, he was seven years and six months old; I found him indolent, lazy, and diverted

with nothing; yet I remarked in him a natural life and spirit, I attributed therefore his laziness to some particular fault of education, and soon discovered it. The Prince's apartment was filled with toys of all kinds; the child in the midst of all this treasure not knowing how to chuse, and desirous to enjoy all, in reality enjoyed none; and was accustomed to inconstancy, which always fatigues and never satisfies. The young prince was likewise attended by five or six persons, whose sole business was to invent amusements, and fetch any play-thing he wanted; or pick up his shuttlecock, ball, &c. He was so accustomed to this servility, that if what he held happened to fall, he never made the least motion to take it up, knowing six persons were ready to strive who should do it for him. I presently banished all these slaves, and replaced them by one child of his own age, sending away at the same time all these toys, reserving only what were really necessary for his amusement. At first he looked on this as a barbarous reformation; but in a very short time he lost his indolence, and assumed all the activity which was natural to him. We had a very serious discourse the day before yesterday. I entered his apartment at eight o'clock, dismissed his valets, and embraced him, saying, you are this day thirteen; your education is not finished, nor can your understanding, or character, be yet formed, but you are no longer a child; and the rank you bear will henceforward make all your actions interesting. Behold, my Lord, here are eight volumes of my writing; they are the journals of your childhood. You will find some reflections, that even
now



now will not be useless to you ; accept this present as a proof of my attention to you.—Oh ! surely it is very dear to me, interrupted the Prince ; I will read it again and again with avidity, and preserve it all my life ; but, continued he, you will not then go on with the journal?—Pardon me, I replied ; I shall now write it with still more care and circumspection ; for this will be done for posterity How ?—My Lord, I again repeat, you are no longer a child ; the journal of your life will now become a history : and as the historian will be exact and faithful, keep a strict guard over yourself ; and remember you will make me very happy every time you give occasion for praise.—But this journal will never be printed Certainly it will ; my writing of it is known, and surely after my death the manuscript will be made public And if I should be so unhappy to do any thing very blameable, would you write that ? No ; the journal would finish there ; but I should leave you Oh ! you will go on with it, I promise you, for I will believe you always, so I shall never commit any great faults. . . . At these words we were both softened ; the Prince has made me promise never to quit him, and I really feel, that if he answers my expectations, he will dispose of my destiny ; and can compensate every sacrifice I make him, notwithstanding the tender attachment I preserve for my country, family, and friends.

A very critical and important period, my dear Baron, approaches ; that, wherein my pupil's passions are going to display themselves : he will certainly have very lively ones. He has

the most ardent desire to distinguish himself; is active, sensible, grateful; not easily led to think ill of any one. He must have evident proofs of their faults; but he thinks well of people too readily; a very dangerous failing in a prince: and yet I shall not attempt to correct it in mine but with the greatest precaution, fearful of impairing the goodness of his heart. Every amiable person he thinks perfect; but judges of people, who are indifferent to him, with discernment far surpassing his age; while he becomes blind to those who please him; and as soon as his heart is touched, examines no more; or to express myself with more propriety, loses a part of his natural penetration. Having great taste and delicacy, the graces make a deep impression on him; and he is easily seduced by a noble and animated discourse. The Abbot *Duguet* says with reason, "Princes, having commonly
"an exquisite taste and elegant manners, are
"more exposed than others to be deceived;
"as they feel, but do not see, the whole. They
"are allured or offended by things that deserve
"it, but which frequently are far from the
"most essential matters; they quickly form a
"judgement, and generally with great exact-
"ness, of what is before their eyes; but that
"which is visible is rarely decisive; and they
"readily dispense with experience, where there
"are certain engaging qualities."

My Prince has been educated with young *Sulback*, the son of his under governor, who, though but sixteen, shews all the virtues of his father, (one of the best men I know!) but the Prince has more esteem than affection for him,
because

because he wants the graces, and has nothing striking in him, though he abounds in discretion and good sense: on the contrary, he has the greatest affection for Count *Stralzi*, sole heir of the noblest house in this kingdom, who is seventeen, has a very fine figure, a superficial understanding, much cunning and pliance of disposition. His birth, and the rank of his father, give him a right to pay his court here frequently; and the Prince receives him far better, than in my heart I could wish; for I look on this as a very dangerous connection. I yet take great pains to disguise my sentiments, knowing remonstrances would not detach the Prince, and only make him suspect me of unjust prejudices; which would entirely prevent the execution of a plan I have formed to open the Prince's eyes by degrees. The arrival of the Chevalier *de Valmont* has made a great diversion in the Prince's sentiments; the Chevalier's accomplishments are much superior to the Count's, and he has sense, education, and modesty sufficient to gain every heart. If he was to remain here, I am very sure that he would supplant the young favourite, even without attempting or wishing it; but unfortunately he leaves us in a month.

I have not, my dear Baron, forgot the promised description of M. *de Murville's* gardens. His illness was very long; and when he was recovering, M. *d'Aimeri* and his grandson were in Russia, so that I have not yet taken the Chevalier *de Valmont* thither, but we shall go in a few days, and I will assuredly write to you on our return. I shall be much obliged to you to communicate

municate this letter to my sister, for you know how anxious she is for all particulars that relate to *M. de Murville*. She has filled six pages with questions on this subject; and wants me to give her an exact detail of all the Chevalier *de Murville*'s thoughts and actions, since he was compelled to relinquish *Cecilia* and his country. If you are still in Paris, please to tell her, that he has quit-
 ted the name of *Anglures*, and resumed his own; that he is forty years old, still handsome, and without grey hairs, that his air is very melancholy, that he has very bad health, and has never loved any but *Cecilia*. These are the principal among a thousand questions my sister wrote; adding, that she should have no rest till I answered her; and if satisfactorily, that she should have but one wish remaining, namely, to have a good portrait of this rare man, a "hero and martyr to love and constancy." Farewell, my dear Baron! remember your promise to send me from Lagaraye a copy of the account you write to my brother-in-law.

LETTER II.

The Baronefs to the Viscountess.

YES, my dear Friend; we arrived at Lagaraye the night before last; *M. d'Almane*, *Dainville*, and my son having made most part of the journey on horseback; poor *Theodore* was extremely

tremely fatigued. You will be much surprised that we have not yet seen *M. de Lagaraye*; but every thing we hear augments our desire to be acquainted with this truly incomparable man. As you insisted on a very exact recital, without the omission of a single circumstance, I must begin my narration from Saturday, the day of our arrival. We alighted at a pretty good inn, and in half an hour a venerable old man, of the most interesting appearance, came into our room, and intreated us to dine with him the next day. We accepted the invitation; and the old man resumed his discourse by saying, you are come to see two angels sent from Heaven to bless this country. . . . They not only attend the sick, but feed the aged and infirm, employ the young, and make all happy. With your permission I will be your guide to-morrow; and I am certain that all you see, will make you revere a thousand times more a character which fame can but imperfectly paint; it is only by having access to him, hearing him, witnessing his actions, that you can give him due praise. During this discourse, which raised our curiosity to the height, I considered attentively and with astonishment the person who delivered it, and could not dissemble my surprise at finding his manners and expressions so far superior to his appearance, which was only that of a peasant. He replied, with a smile, my history is really singular, and if it excites your curiosity, I will relate it to-morrow, with double pleasure, as it will be at the same time a tribute of gratitude to Madame and Mons. *de Lagaraye*. I live and am happy, and entirely through their munificence.

He finished these words with eyes swimming in tears ; we surveyed each other, and a sentiment of inexpressible tenderness made ours also overflow. I asked if we could see *M. de Lagaraye* to-morrow ; he replied that that gentleman was gone six leagues from hence to comfort and assist the inhabitants of a farm, which had been burnt down, but that we should be introduced to him as soon as he returned.

The next day we were all up and dressed by day-break, our good old man breakfasted with us ; and then said, if you will follow me, I will conduct you to the manufactories ; hospitals are all you have heard of, but you will be convinced that *M. de Lagaraye* has formed establishments of every kind : At these words we all set out, and our guide led us directly to the great street of the village ; there he stopt and said, you see these plain rustic houses ; they are filled with immense numbers of persons ; most of these cottages are new. The stranger and the wretched, drawn hither, and entertained by *M. de Lagaraye*, have for ten years been crowding to inhabit these mansions of peace and happiness. Each unfortunate Being finds here a friendly country, which offers him the honourable resources of labour, and the means to accomplish his schemes, or to establish himself elsewhere. People of every country are found at Lagaraye ; it is the sure refuge of laborious misery ; the idle and vicious alone are banished, and treated as strangers. Heaven, which blesses this place, grants to its happy inhabitants health, strength, and industry : and in no part of the world is population so extensive. In truth, the first view of
this

this street offers a most interesting and agreeable picture; a multitude of little children meet you at every step; the houses, all open, display the most charming neatness; numbers of women of all ages, and young girls, are seen spinning and singing by an husband or father's side, who is working at his trade of carpenter, hatter, wheelwright, &c. &c. In short, every thing breathes an air of gaiety, plenty, and content. From this street we entered another rather less, where we saw a great many women, but not one man: surprised, I asked our guide the reason, who answered, The street you have left contains the artificers; part of its inhabitants, as I have already told you, are strangers, unfortunate artificers without bread or means, when they came to establish themselves here; the remainder were their apprentices, who preferred settling here to carrying their talents elsewhere. That street alone contains men of sedentary lives; this and all the rest are occupied by labourers, who work on buildings, repair the great roads, or till the earth; at night, their labour finished, they return apparently without fatigue; and perfectly happy in the idea, that their work is not for the benefit of others, but secures a subsistence for their wives and children. As the old man ceased speaking, we perceived a vast brick edifice, of a long and irregular form; it was the manufactory: we were led into a large hall, where twenty-six girls were making lace with four elderly women to overlook them: You see, said our old man, those four young women at the end of that little table; they are my daughters; above I have three sons; and all these, the de-

light and comfort of my age, live and enjoy their existence solely by the generous compassion of *M. de Lagaraye*. After this speech, which brought on many still more interesting, he conducted us into a little gallery, where we found twelve spinners. We then went up stairs to the mens apartments; and you may easily believe chose to begin by that, in which his sons were employed; there we saw twenty-six weavers; and in the last room found a cloth manufactory, in which were forty workmen, not including those who directed it. Now, says the old man, if you are not fatigued, I will shew you the plantations; we consented; and he took us quite across the village, and stopt in the open field, desiring us to observe those long and beautiful avenues of young trees opposite to us, those fertile fields, rich meadows, and luxuriant harvests; this land, heretofore uncultivated and abandoned, offered to view only a vast morass, whence noxious vapours spread sickness and death on all around. Admire this blissful change, and recognise in it the author *M. de Lagaraye*. You cannot take a step here, but it reminds us of and proves his beneficence; we owe him every thing, even the pure and healthy air we breathe. You may conceive the number of hands employed for such works; he has made skilful labourers by good pay and constant work; and the earth rendered fertile, by augmenting his riches, impowers him to maintain and extend these immense undertakings. Whilst the good old man was talking I contemplated with much emotion this happy and living soil; and said to myself, if the will of one man can give birth

birth to so much happiness, can produce so many useful things, how is it possible such models should be so rare? Ah! if the sight of ill is dangerous, if its example is contagious, how touching and persuasive is that of virtue? Vice may well assume the most seducing form, but she has always some side that discovers her, and gives distaste even to those she misleads; whilst the charms of virtue are pure and unmixed, like herself. But let us then return to Lagaraye. After having walked till noon it was time to go in. We dined with the old man, who according to promise recounted his adventures, which appeared to me so interesting and singular, that I returned immediately to the inn, that I might write them whilst the impression remained.

I left *Adelaide* in the care of *Madame d'Ostalis*, and *Miss Bridget*, and passed the rest of the day writing the enormous packet I now send you. This morning we are told *M. de Lagaraye* does not return till night, so we shall not enjoy the happiness so earnestly desired till to-morrow, and it is *M. d'Almane* who is to write the Viscount the particulars of that interesting interview; in short, our heads are all turned with what we have already seen. *Theodore* and *Adelaide* wept much during the good old man's narration; they talk and think of nothing but *M. de Lagaraye*, and have really a passionate desire to see him. In short, I am delighted to observe in their young hearts an enthusiasm for virtue, consequently they will draw from this journey all the fruit we could wish. Farewell, my dear friend: do not lose our old man's history; it is *Adelaide* who lends it you; for I have promised to send it on condition,

dition, that you return it to her, as we pass through Paris.

The Life of St. André.

THE name of this excellent old man's father was *Vilmore*, a man of low extraction; who had amassed an amazing fortune very rapidly, and whom you must recollect hearing your father-in-law (who was born in the same province) frequently mention. *M. de Vilmore* had several children, of whom *St. André* was the youngest. *M. de Vilmore*, anxious to marry his daughters nobly, that he might be aggrandised by alliances, and desirous to secure a vast estate and brilliant fortune to his eldest son, sacrificed the young *St. André* to these ambitious views. He had him brought up at a distance, on a very small income, where his education was totally neglected; but the goodness of his disposition and understanding made him exceed the expectation of his masters. When he attained his sixteenth year, he was informed that he had no other choice but the church. A lively fancy, strong passions, and the knowledge of his parents riches, all conspired to give him an insurmountable disgust to that profession. He desired to see and speak to his father, in hopes of making him change his design. *M. de Vilmore*, not knowing his intentions, granted his request; and he arrived at his father's house, when they were celebrating his sister's nuptials, with the Marquis of C—. He found his father, brother, and sisters in the midst of grandeur and opulence; they looked on him as a stranger, and his father treated him
with

with disdain and indifference; he discerned and felt all the misfortunes such a reception indicated; however he spoke, and with as much firmness as respect. Let mediocrity, said he, be my lot; I can be content; but do not debar me of my liberty, nor force me to engage in a profession, for which my aversion is invincible. *M. de Vilmore*, rendered furious by resistance, overwhelmed him with the most cruel reproaches: Your obstinacy, said he, would ruin you, did not my goodness still leave you time for reflection; I will send you for six months to one of your aunts in Flanders, when, if you are not entirely resigned to my will, I shall employ the most violent means to make you know your duty. The hapless *St. Andrè* set out for Lisle in despair; but fixed in his resolution. An interesting figure, an amiable character, with manners mild and noble, made him soon taken notice of in his exile, whilst the charms of society softened its rigours; unsuspecting and inexperienced, he was easily led away by every one who approached him. The regiment of ——— was then at Lisle; the officers gamed very high, and knowing the immense riches of *M. de Vilmore*, engaged his son in their dangerous parties; he began, as is generally the case, by winning; and which is still more inevitable, ended by losing. The hopes of recovering his money led him on, until he had lost upon honour 24,000 livres: reduced to despair, he wrote to his father, confessing his fault in the most pathetic terms: his only answer was an arrest, they confined him in the castle of Saumur. He submitted to this punishment with a gentleness not to be expected from a character

character naturally violent; knowing all his debts were paid, gratitude made him bear with patience a treatment, he could not imagine would be of long duration; notwithstanding, contrary to his expectations, he remained a prisoner two years: this barbarous usage soured his temper, and made him lose part of those sentiments of moderation he had till then preserved: at length his prison doors were opened, and this sentence pronounced: "You must give your word and honour either to become an ecclesiastic, or go a volunteer to India." My choice is made, cried *St. André*; and I shall be happy to leave a country foreign to me, since I have neither father, relations, nor friends: this answer fixed his fate; he was sent to Brest, and two days after embarked. Thus did an unnatural father drive beyond the seas a youth of eighteen, of the most promising genius, without succour, money, rank, or establishment; and perhaps in hopes that, surrounded with perils, oppressed with misery and poverty, he might put a period to his unfortunate life.

His youth, however, made him support the most excessive fatigues; and his courage rendered him superior to his fortune. He distinguished himself, and being promoted, soon emerged from misery and oblivion; these successes led to many still more advantageous; having gained reputation and friends, they joined with him in commercial enterprises, which in a country so fertile in resources, procured him in less than five years happiness and independence. Content with a moderate but honest fortune, raised to an honourable rank, he began to turn
his

his thoughts towards his country; still young, he was not insensible to the vain desire of exhibiting to his family the rapid fruits of his industry; resolving however to return to the Indies, but not as driven thither by necessity, but as led by ambition and glory. His father, informed of his good success, had for two years before condescended to acknowledge him; and to write to him; and appeared cured of his prejudices.

A truce concluded for a year promised him a security which was not to be forfeited by a delay of his voyage; and he embarked with his whole fortune in paper: this imprudence was the cause of all his misfortunes; for scarcely was he at sea, but the truce was broke, his vessel attacked, taken by the English, and himself carried prisoner to Launceston, a town in the west of England: thus were all his hopes blasted, and he lost at once his liberty and his fortune. He wrote to his father, who filled up the measure of his woes by returning a letter full of reproaches. At the end of six months he was released, approached the coast of France, and beheld that fatal shore, and arrived at Brest nearly in the same miserable situation in which he had left it six years before. Without hope or money, entirely destitute, he recollected a surgeon, named *Bertrand*, with whom he had lodged, and from whom he had received many marks of friendship; and soon found this honest man; who offered him his house, purse, and every service in his power. *St. André* accepted without blushing the courtesies of friendship; and wrote to *M. de Vilmore* demanding his portion, which

which he had never received, and even forgot during his prosperity. The answer contained a promise of money on condition only of his re-embarking for India in a vessel ready to sail: such inconceivable severity alienated an heart long since soured. Resentment and despair deprived him of courage. He fell dangerously ill, and was soon reduced to the last extremity. *Bertrand* watched him night and day, and paid him every attention the tenderest friendship could exact. *Bertrand* had a daughter of the age of eighteen, who, thinking only to follow the impulse of a laudable compassion, remained by the hapless *St. André's* bedside, and shared with her father the employment of his nurse. *Bertrand* related his unfortunate adventures, told her of his successes in India, extolled his perseverance, courage, and accomplishments, of all which there were several witnesses at Brest; and they both wept at a lot so unmerited and deplorable. *St. André*, delirious from the beginning of his illness, was incapable of enjoying such affecting care; and being before oppressed with affliction, and always shut up in his room, *Blanche* (for that was the name of *Bertrand's* daughter) had been scarcely seen, and never remarked by him. This young woman, notwithstanding the obscurity of her birth, was known and celebrated in Brest for a superior education, a behaviour replete with modesty and sweetness, and still more for her personal charms.

One night when *St. André's* life was despaired of, *Blanche*, seated sorrowfully by him, observed with unusual tenderness the unhappy object of so much care and anxiety. A deadly paleness
seemed

seemed to overspread his features, rendered still more affecting by the graces of youth yet visible in them. He lay with eyes apparently closed for ever, with one hand extended on the bed, on which *Blanche* (impelled by an irresistible impulse) let fall one of her's, and finding it immoveable and cold, she thought him dead: Oh, Heaven! exclaimed she, all is over; unfortunate young man! . . . terror, pity, and a sentiment still more tender, prevented her saying more, and she fell down by the bedside without sense or motion. At that instant *St. André*, recovering from his trance, opened his eyes, and the first object which struck them, was *Blanche* in a swoon by him: it was youth and beauty surrounded by the shadow of death. He uttered a piercing cry; help arrives; and *Blanche* is speedily restored. This affecting scene is explained; and *St. André* recovers only to receive into his soul emotions of the most passionate gratitude. Thus, in the midst of agonizing horrors, and on the brink of the grave, did love unite for ever two unfortunate hearts, fixed his shafts indelibly, and proved that his power was irresistible, even under the most dreadful and affecting form.

St. André, quickly recovering, gave himself up entirely to the dangerous impression of a passion, which he experienced for the first time. He easily obtained that confession, on which depended his happiness. *Blanche* had betrayed herself, even before she was beloved, and now happy and tranquil, confirmed by transports of joy, what despair had already declared. *Bertrand* himself, seduced by pity, affection, and perhaps ambition,

ambition, consented, after a slight resistance, to the joint request of *St. André* and his daughter, and approved of a secret union, which took place six months after *St. André's* illness, and raised him to the height of his wishes at the age of twenty-five. Not desiring or expecting any assistance from his father, he resolved to conceal his marriage, and to seize the first opportunity of returning to India, with his wife and her father. He made several applications; and by the help of his reputation and friends, soon saw a possibility of being constantly employed in a very advantageous manner. During these transactions *Blanche* became pregnant; he pressed his solicitations in hopes of getting to India in time for his wife's delivery; but his affairs not keeping pace with his wishes, they perceived it would be impossible to elude the discovery of a secret, already well known in the city. He therefore took the resolution of informing his father of it by letter; and wrote to him in these terms:

“ Sir, can you recollect the name and existence of a wretch so long forgotten? I ought to believe you have renounced for ever the rights which nature gave you over me. I know what were my first errors: if my youth could not then excuse them in your eyes, six years exile, passed in useful, and I will be bold to say, glorious pursuits, might, I sometimes flattered myself, have obliterated them; but cruelly abandoned in my last misfortunes, I found in a stranger the compassion, assistance, and tenderness of a father. Without renouncing him who rejects me, I thought myself at liberty to adopt one, who by his beneficence

" science and virtue proved himself worthy of so
 " sacred a title. Obscure, poor, without rank
 " or fortune, but honest and sensible, is the fa-
 " ther I have chosen. By accepting his favours,
 " residing in his house, and marrying his daugh-
 " ter, I am become his son: and the felicity
 " that it has procured me, exceeds if possible
 " all the misfortunes I have endured. I have a
 " due respect for the distinctions established in
 " society; and had I been born in a rank, that
 " such an alliance would have dishonoured, my
 " courage would have enabled me to sacrifice my
 " passion, and with it the whole happiness of
 " my life, to the honour of my family. But,
 " thank God, no such obstacle existed; my
 " wife's birth is equal to mine, as is her for-
 " tune; her father is poor; there is the only
 " difference between us; therefore no reason
 " could or ought to have impeded me. I am
 " bound by a tie which love and honour renders
 " equally dear and sacred to me; and I beg
 " you to believe, that ambition, authority, and
 " even the laws themselves would in vain at-
 " tempt to dissolve it. I am going to India to
 " begin a new career; I entreat you not to
 " trouble my destiny by clamours which cannot
 " change it. I desire nothing but tranquillity,
 " and forgetfulness of a country which I aban-
 " don perhaps for ever. This is the only favour
 " I dare ask, I ought to hope, and do expect it
 " from your justice.

" I have the honour to be, &c."

This letter produced the most terrible effects
 in *M. de Vilmore*; it hurt his pride too much, not
 to inflame his anger to the height; the compa-
 rison

rison between his family and *Bertrand's* appeared to him the extreme of impudence; he procured at the same time two warrants; *St. André* was torn from the arms of his distracted wife, loaded with irons, and cast into a dungeon: and *Blanche*, notwithstanding her youth and condition, experienced a similar treatment. It was there this unfortunate woman brought into the world the unhappy fruits of their deplorable passion; they wanted to rob her of her infant; but her resistance, sobs and tears, touched their hearts, and made them sensible of pity for the first time; so that she retained her child, and to preserve his life, was careful of her own. In the mean time *St. André*, drove to desperation, distracted, furious, invoked vengeance, and demanded *Blanche* or death; three months passed in this dreadful way; when he was told that a man desired to speak with him from his father. My father! cried he, I have none. At that instant he beheld a person, whom he knew was *M. de Vilmore's* steward: Oh! says *St. André*, does the barbarian, who sends you, grant my prayers? Do you bring me death, for that is the only favour I can expect from him?—Compose yourself, Sir, replied the man; I come to announce to you a fortune, to which you had no pretensions; whilst you are accusing fate, she is labouring for your welfare; your brother is dead, and you become the natural heir to a father, who can still pardon, and receive you with open arms.—What do you say? interrupted *St. André*, my brother dead! Heaven is just; it takes from my persecutor the object his pride rendered so dear to him; and I, the victim sacrificed

sacrificed to his cruel ambition, have not invoked vengeance in vain.—Hear me, said the steward, and rather merit by your repentance the favours offered you. *M. de Vilmore*, founder of his own fortune, is at liberty to dispose of it; he has two daughters whom he might enrich at your expence, but having no grandchild of his name, and compassionating your faults and misfortunes, he invites you to the succession from which death has taken your brother; his dignities and fortunes await you. You may easily imagine, by what blind submission such favours are to be purchased.—Speak, Sir, returned *St. André* coldly; a father, who will again receive me, and calls for my hand to wipe away his tears, is doubtless incapable of imposing dishonourable terms; therefore speak, I listen without fear.—You must, Sir, abjure for ever a disgraceful as well as an unlawful marriage. A competent fortune will console *Blanche* for your mutual error; your consent alone is wanting to dissolve these shameful bands; every other step is already taken, and it is at this price alone you can pretend Enough! interrupted *St. André*, I foresaw from the beginning of your discourse this odious proposal, yet had the patience to hear you; attend in your turn to my answer. I may be persecuted, oppressed, robbed of my wife, child, and life, all these cruelties are possible to tyranny armed with power, but honour is a good they cannot take from me, and I will preserve it pure and spotless, happy to suffer for the objects of my love and esteem. This is my final and irrevocable resolution; violence, torments, and even death itself, nothing in the universe shall

shall make me change it.—The steward would have replied ; but *St. André* refusing to hear any more, he left him with the shame and regret of having vainly attempted to seduce an incorruptible man. *Blanche* in her prison experienced a persecution still more odious and unjust. She was prest to relinquish her rights, and her title of wife to *St. André* ; they made her very advantageous proposals for herself and child ; and by turns employed prayers and menaces. Her constant answer was, that she expected from her husband the example she ought to follow ; she hoped for one of courage and fidelity ; but that in every case she was resolved to make his conduct the model for hers. *M. de Vilmore*, despairing to conquer so firm and settled a resistance, gave himself up to all the fury pride and resentment could inspire in a cruel and implacable soul : they snatched from the wretched mother's arms her dear child, the only hope and comfort of her life ; they loaded the unhappy couple with heavier chains ; augmented the horrors and cruelty of a prison ; and, to compleat their misery, assured them this treatment was to continue for life. Four years passed in this horrid situation ; yet *St. André* made it a duty to live and suffer for that love which had sustained him. By indefatigable pains and perseverance, he corrupted one of his gaolers : and unable to obtain his liberty, he prevailed on this person to procure him pens, ink, and paper ; with which he wrote a true history of his life, and concluded it by demanding his liberty, his wife, and child ; without pretending to his father's goods, or even to his just inheritance. This
petition

petition was inscribed *To my Country*, and began thus: "I have shed my blood for her; I am an
 " obscure citizen, but innocent and persecuted;
 " my cause is that of all virtuous and feeling
 " hearts: loaded with chains, dying and for-
 " lorn in an infamous dungeon; as father, hus-
 " band and son, equally unfortunate, I cast my-
 " self into the arms of the first of my country-
 " men, who shall read this history, and I con-
 " jure him to have the generosity and compas-
 " sion to protect and defend an unhappy man,
 " enslaved for near five years by violence and
 " tyranny. May a good and virtuous hand de-
 " posit this writing at the foot of the royal tri-
 " bunal which protects the innocent! and may
 " I, in embracing my wife and son, forget for
 " ever the torments I have suffered."

The man whom *St. Andrè* had gained, got this history secretly printed, and distributed several copies. An advocate, celebrated for his talents and his virtues, moved by so mournful a detail, was desirous of the glory of supporting so singular and interesting a cause: and notwithstanding the credit and opposition of *M. de Vilmore*, he soon made all the tribunals resound with the cries of the wretched *St. Andrè*. He enquired the fate of *Bertrand*; and learnt that grief had put a period to his days within six months; he had the young child delivered into his hands; and at length obtained liberty for *St. Andrè* and his wife. When he went to her prison. *Blanche* was ignorant of all these circumstances; and utterly in despair, expected from death alone the end of those cruel pains, which rent her heart. The generous advocate,

led by humanity, penetrated the dreary abode, where youth, beauty, and virtue in distress displayed a most affecting picture: he held the child in his arms; and entering a most dismal dungeon, he saw by the glimmering of a melancholy lamp, *Blanche* laying on straw, with dishevelled hair, clad in miserable rags, her face overflowed with tears, and her beautiful hands raised to heaven, though loaded with irons. He stopt to contemplate with a mixture of pity and admiration her charms, her youth, and the horrors that surrounded her. *Blanche*, imagining she heard the goaler, raised her pensive head, and asked with a weak and dying voice, what he wanted.—I come, cried the advocate, to do homage to suffering virtue, and to terminate its sorrows. On concluding these words he prostrated himself at her feet, and presented her child: *Blanche* recollecting him, exclaimed, Oh! if he be restored me, I can support life. She strove to embrace him, but extacy and transport increasing her weakness, she fainted in the arms of her deliverer. What words can do justice to the emotions of surprize and rapture, which filled her sensible and affectionate heart? when on regaining her senses, she learned that the goodness of an utter stranger was going to unite her for ever to her husband. Come, said the advocate, quit this frightful dwelling, which has but too long echoed the groans of innocence; come! that I may deposit in the arms of a father and a husband two objects so dear. But, continued he, you must not go out in this wretched condition; I have foreseen every thing, and have brought in this parcel, all that
is

is at present necessary; dress yourself, whilst I go and shew the keeper my order, and in a quarter of an hour I will return and fetch you. He left her without waiting for an answer; and *Blanche* found in the bundle linen and a completeat dress, in which nothing was omitted; she sprinkled with tears these precious pledges of a beneficence at once so delicate and so attentive; and her heart, again open to happiness, was overcome with gratitude.

The advocate returned; as happy and as much moved as *Blanche*, he led her with a trembling hand, assisted in carrying her son, and snatched her with transport from that dreary abode of bitterness and horror, a coach waited, and quickly conveyed them to *St. André's* prison; they were admitted, and *Blanche* clasping her son in her arms, ran and threw herself into those of her husband; and at that moment they experienced all that love and joy could inspire in two fond hearts, raised suddenly from the depth of despair to the height of happiness. The advocate stood opposite them, contemplating with delight so sweet a scene; saying to himself, this is my work; and doubtless was not the least happy of the three. *Blanche* tore herself suddenly from the arms of her husband, and threw herself at her benefactor's feet. Here, says she, is the guardian angel, the beneficent Being, who restores your wife, your child, and your liberty! She could not proceed, sobs stopt her words. *St. André* flew, and cast himself on his knees by her, saying, Alas! my heart impoisoned during five years by hatred, relinquishes for ever all sentiments of anger or revenge; gratitude and

love will henceforward occupy it entirely; yes, I forget my persecutors and my misfortunes; I renounce the torment of rage, and consecrate every emotion of my soul to the dear objects restored to me, and to the most generous of men.

From this pathetic scene, the life of *St. André* describes nothing but a long series of misfortunes, of which I shall only give you the most interesting parts. His generous benefactor received them at first into his own house; then settled them in a farm, where they dwelt peaceably during two years, engaged in husbandry; his diligence nearly doubled the revenues of the land, and procured him the pleasure of being useful to his patron. He made many unsuccessful efforts to get into the army; but Mr. *de Vilmore's* hatred, ever active and vigilant, constantly prevented him; he had the misfortune to lose his son, and a short time after his benefactor and sole support. Overburthened with sorrow, he removed with his wife to the extremity of a distant province, resolving to subsist there unknown, by the work of his hands: it was in Auvergne that he fixed his unhappy fate; his talents for husbandry, and his courage as well as his wife's, procured them the means of life; they both entered into the service of a rich farmer; *St. André* cultivated the earth, whilst *Blanche*, occupied in the work of the house, overcame by these laborious employments her distaste to them and her delicacy. During six years passed in this manner *St. André* had several children, to whom he gave an education suitable to their condition; and accustoming himself to this laborious but quiet life, he at length became possessor

feffor of a small spot of ground, which by cultivation was fufficient to maintain his family; thither they retired, and during ten years tafted all the fweets of peace and happinefs. Content with his lot, he forgot in the embraces of his wife and children the difference of this fortune, from that to which he feemed entitled at his birth; an unexpected event came to deftroy the fruits of time and reafon; and to replunge him into a dreadful abyfs of cares and misfortunes. *M. de Vilmore* having been attacked for almoft a year by a flow but mortal difeafe, felt fome remorse for his unnatural conduct towards his fon: on the brink of the grave, his troubled confcience made him look forward with horror to the formidable moment of an approaching diffolution; religion, fo confoling to thofe who have lived well, could only add to the fecret terrors that haunted him; he ftrove in vain to banifh the cutting remorse that purfued him; he drew to that period, when the moft perverse mortal has no longer the pernicious faculty of deceiving himfelf; truth, fo dreadful to the guilty, came to dazzle and to confound him; and determined him at laft to get information of the fituation in which his fon was. He fpoke to his fteward, who being a man of probity, and interefted for the haplefs *St. Andrè*, after many fruitlefs recherches difcovered his retreat, and wrote him the following letter:—" *M. de Vilmore* is dying, and wifhes for
" you. His oppreffed heart is again awake to
" tendernefs; do not therefore hesitate; fly into
" the arms of a father, who daily reproaches
" himfelf with all the misfortunes under which

“ you have so long groaned. There is yet
“ time ; profit from these moments ; his vain
“ desires of pride and ambition are now anni-
“ hilated. He wishes to see you, but has not
“ courage to ask it ; he is surrounded by your
“ enemies, who already devour his substance
“ and yours. I advertise you of their secret
“ dispositions ; appear ; conduct to his feet
“ your unfortunate family, and you will re-
“ cover all your rights, but make haste ; all
“ depends on your activity and diligence.”—*St.*

Andrè hesitated not, the interest of his children outweighed every other reflection ; he sold at an under price his little inclosure, and set out with his family. On quitting this loved place a confused emotion made him shed tears ; he regretted his humble cottage, and could not tear himself away without feeling grief and trouble inexpressible. To expedite their arrival he was compelled to buy a carriage and travel post, and the expences of this journey nearly consumed the fruits of sixteen years hard labour. At length he descried the walls of Paris, and presently after the splendid habitation of his father.—At this sight *Blanche* threw herself into his arms :—here then, said she, would have been your abode without me ; and yet you can regret that we have now left *St. Andrè* wept and embraced her, and this instant, which brought before her eyes the full value of those sacrifices, with which he had never reproached her, this moment, so affecting and so flattering, was perhaps one of the sweetest of her life.

But alas ! what grievous news awaited them ! the friendly steward ran to him, and informed them,

them, "that he had in the night informed his
 "master of their approach, but that these tidings
 "did not at the time determine him; that he
 "had passed a most dreadful night; and in the
 "morning feeling himself near his end, he de-
 "sired a confessor to be called; and after two
 "long conferences he resolved to make a new
 "will. Thus far all was favourable for you,
 "continued the steward; the worthy priest spoke
 "with so much energy of his proceedings against
 "you, that, penetrated with awe and remorse,
 "he did not hesitate about sending for his no-
 "tary; But at that minute your courier arrived
 "with intelligence, that you would be here in
 "two hours, *M. de Vilmore* at that moment
 "experienced an emotion, which produced
 "the most fatal effects; he instantly lost the use
 "of speech, a circumstance rendered still more
 "terrible to him, as he retains his senses and
 "recollection perfect: in fine, he knows you
 "are here, and manifests the greatest desire to
 "see you; the physicians say, that your presence
 "may occasion another change, and restore to
 "him the faculty he is deprived of; come, Sir,
 "let us lose no more time."—At these words
St. André, followed by his family, went into his
 father's apartment; who on seeing him raised his
 eyes to heaven, and stretched out his arms to
 him. *St. André* ran, and threw himself on his
 knees by the bed-side; *M. de Vilmore* regarded
 him with the most pathetic expression in his
 eyes, and the name of *St. André* burst from his
 lips; on this the confessor ran to him, and said,
 "make one effort more, your lawyer is here;
 "one word, a single word will confirm the for-

“tunes of a wretch, whom your silence and death
“will doom for ever to the most frightful poverty;
“implore the Almighty for grace, in these
“last moments allotted you, to make reparation
“for the sufferings of innocence.”

At these tremendous words, *M. de Vilmore* lifted his clasped hands to heaven, opened his mouth, attempted to speak, but could only articulate a few interrupted and confused sounds. Grief, terror, and remorse were painted on his countenance; his arms stiffened, and the paleness of death overspread his features, the priest approached, and offered him the crucifix; but this miserable dying sinner, raving with agony and despair, cast a dreadful look on his son, and beholding with a wild and furious air the proffered crucifix, pushed it from him with horror: the most shocking convulsions at this instant ended his life. The bare recital of so terrible and insupportable a death makes one tremble, and is a lesson for ever useful and striking for fathers (if there remain any such) who are capable of hating and of abandoning their offspring. He died without making any provision for *St. Andrè*; there was no will but such a one as hatred had dictated: thus his irresolution and too late remorse served only to make his end more agonizing and dreadful, without altering the condition of his unhappy son; who was now infinitely more to be pitied than ever, and reflected with dismay on all the woes to which this last reverse had reduced him. He had still some money remaining; he retired with his family to a remote suburb, where he hired an apartment to reflect at least during the night on the course they should pursue; the children
fatigued

fatigued with their journey, and still too young to feel the torments of disappointment, soon fell asleep, and peaceably enjoyed the most profound repose. One melancholy lamp gave light to this gloomy retreat; *St. André*, now dumb and motionless, sat with wandering eyes; then started up and traversed the room with hasty steps, and discovered by every gesture the cruel agitations of his soul. *Blanche*, till then overpowered by grief, looked up, sighed, ran and threw herself at his feet.—Alas, miserable man! said she, into what an abyss have I plunged you! without me, without this fatal love, you would this day be happy, and your life would have been as fortunate as it is now deplorable: but if you still love me, your courage will not abandon you;—let the voice of your wife and the sight of your children revive you.—My children, replied *St. André*, my children! I could support thy misery and my own, but these unfortunates! have they thy reason or thy strength? See them lament and suffer! No, no; it would be better . . . At these words he paused, and went to the other end of the room, and threw himself into a chair.—Oh, heaven! exclaimed the affrighted *Blanche*, what do you make me imagine? What horrid design? . . . She could say no more, sobs stopt her speech; *St. André* came to her with a fierce and gloomy air:—Believe me, *Blanche*, dry your tears, we have endured life long enough; our task is ended, one moment will set us free, and I have courage to give you the example.—This terrible speech re-animated *Blanche*, who collecting all her fortitude; with a firm voice ex-

claimed—Who I! shall I thus offend heaven and nature? I abandon my children? I should be altogether wicked and barbarous. Alas! I am only unfortunate; innocence is left me; and I can support it all.—Yes, if you condemn me to the agony of surviving you, I shall have the courage to endeavour at least to prolong so cruel an existence, I will live for thy children, those hapless children, whom you would betray and abandon to misfortunes, which you yourself have not the courage to endure.—At these words some tears fell from the eyes of *St. André*, and his wife seeing him softened, seized that favourable moment to melt and draw him back to virtue. *St. André* having recollected himself, acknowledged, detested and abjured his ill conduct; was convinced, that religion, honour and nature equally required him to live; but his body sunk under these violent agitations; he was seized with a burning fever, which soon carried him to the brink of the grave, and reduced *Blanche* to the utmost extremity of grief; she beheld on one side her dying husband, and on the other her dear children famishing with cold and hunger. In this distress she invoked heaven to terminate by one blow the miserable existence of so many innocents. One morning, mournfully seated by his bed, she considered his visage disfigured by the shades of death, which recalled to her remembrance that period of her youth, when, in a situation nearly similar, she felt the first impression of a passion, since so fatal to both; this thought reanimating her tenderness, she seized one of his hands, and bathing it with her tears—Oh, my dear husband!

said

said she, falling on her knees, can you pardon me the torments with which my luckless love has poisoned all your days?—Alas! replied *St. André*, my last moments are doubtless terrifying; since I leave you and my children in the depth of misery; but if this dismal and painful race was to be run over again, I would endure it all to possess you.—These words were scarcely uttered, when the door flew open on a sudden, and a sight the most unexpected riveted the eyes and attention of the unhappy pair. A young lady of about twenty-five years of age, of a charming figure, appeared, leading a little girl seven years old, and advanced with an affectionate air towards the bed, where she stopped and dismissed her attendants: and causing the door to be shut, addressed herself to *Blanche* in a soft voice, and asked her name. *Blanche* confused and abashed, hesitated and trembled; *St. André*, conquered his weakness sufficiently to raise himself, and in a few words delineated their wretched situation. I see, said the lady, they told me true; God grant I may not be too late; and you, my child, said she, turning to her daughter who was weeping, observe well this room; and the affecting objects it contains; and never suffer the idea to be erased from your memory;—take this purse, and deposit it at the foot of the bed, approach with respect, we owe that to the unfortunate; and by never forgetting it, you will one day become worthy the sacred trust, with which I now honour you.

You surely wish for the name of this charming and generous unknown; and you will be still more interested, when I tell you that it was

Madame *de Lagaraye* in the bloom of youth, with that daughter she has since lost; that only child who died at fifteen, and who, blessed with such an education and example, might justly be the delight of so virtuous a mother: but to return to *St. Andrè*: M. *de Lagaraye* hearing his history, was so sensibly touched by his sufferings, that he offered him an asylum on his estate; and at length placed him at the head of his new establishment, which he has now directed six years. M. *de Lagaraye* provided for all his children, and crowned all his favours by the gift of a charming house, surrounded by an immense garden; it is in this delightful retreat, that *St. Andrè* passes in sweet repose the relics of a life heretofore so turbulent; it is there where the praises of Monsieur and Madame *de Lagaraye* resound every hour, and where their respectable names are written on all the walls, and celebrated every instant by the voices of sentiment and gratitude.

LETTER III.

The Baron to the Viscount.

AT length I have this morning enjoyed the happiness of seeing and admiring the most respectable and interesting of human beings. During the three days we have been at Lagaraye, I have had time to inform myself thoroughly of all he has done: I desired to know him

him perfectly by his actions before I saw him; and beyond all I wished, that my son (previously to that moment he so anxiously waited for), might be circumstantially acquainted with the degree of admiration which *M. de Lagaraye* merited from him, in order that I might observe the impression, which the first interview with so extraordinary a man produced on *Theodore*: it was not sufficient for me that my son should behold him with emotion, I would have him unable to approach him without transport, and said to myself, "If *Theodore* is not beside himself at the sight of *St. André's* benefactor, and of the founder of all these works, I have deceived myself, my system of education is of no value, and I have done nothing worthy of praise."

This morning my son, awakened by his impatience, rose before day; and all of us were dressed and assembled by six o'clock, and conducted by *St. André* took the road to what is here from habit still called the Castle: it is a quarter of a league from the village, through an avenue of ancient elms; *Adelaide* and *Theodore*, though naturally so lively, walked quietly by us, keeping a profound silence, instead of skipping and chattering incessantly, as is their practice when animated by any thing interesting; the truth is, they were really struck: a common sentiment is expressed by lively and quick motions, but a deep impression ever produces a kind of oppression and recollection, which renders us at once equally serious, attentive, and sedate. We were all on foot, and after a quarter of an hour's walk we perceived at the bottom

tom of the avenue a castle, whose elegant and noble architecture displayed grandeur and magnificence. Here *St. André* made us stop, whilst he told us, that this splendid edifice was the work of *M. de Lagaraye's* father; vanity laid the foundation, and could not foresee the use it would this day be put to; as the apartments are spacious, *M. de Lagaraye* only changed the partitions to make it suitable to his design; it is there he lives, and there is the hospital for men: turn your eyes to the right, and you will see a large new building quite unadorned, that is the hospital which *M. de Lagaraye* has built for women. When *St. André* ceased speaking, we quickened our pace, and soon reached the gates of the Castle. It was seven o'clock; a porter dressed in grey asked our names, and admitted us. We crossed two immense courts, and on entering the house were told, *M. de Lagaraye* was in the chapel, where mass was going to begin; and thither we desired to be conducted. *St. André* told us, he should not present us till *M. de Lagaraye* came out of the chapel; we went in, and seated ourselves on an empty bench near the door. You will easily imagine how eagerly I cast my eyes around to discover *M. de Lagaraye*. *St. André* whispered me, No seat or distinction will point him out; but he is in sight; seek and guess. At this moment my son struck my view, and I must own he alone fixed my attention. He was on tiptoe, his neck stretched out, his mouth half open, his breath appeared oppressed; and in this attitude his looks, blushes, and every action was expressive of the most lively emotion and curiosity.

curiosity. There were, exclusive of ourselves, near fifty people; part convalescents, and the remainder servants, and workmen; but all dressed in one uniform of coarse grey cloth: thus it was very difficult to distinguish M. de Lagaraye, wearing the same dress with the others, and seated accidentally. On a sudden my son, quite transported, caught hold of my arm, crying out—See, there he is, that surely must be him—and pointing to a man of a noble and striking figure, and whose long white hair, though he was not very old, spread over his shoulders, gave to his whole countenance a most venerable air, which commanded respect; the fervour of his devotion distinguished him, and all eyes were turned towards him.—Yes, it is he, says *Theodore*, see, all eyes are fixed on him.—Indeed my son was not mistaken, and doubtless these were the features, by which he most deserved to be known. Mass being ended, every body rose, and made way for M. de Lagaraye, who went out followed by the crowd blessing him as he passed. *St. André* then went up to him, and announced in a low voice the intent of our journey; which done he presented us; M. de Lagaraye received us with a politeness full of ease and sweetness,—he embraced *Dainville* and me, and was going to do my son the like honour; but *Theodore*, forced by an impulse (which filled me with delight,) put one knee to the ground, and kissed his hand, which he wet with the sweetest tears he will perhaps ever shed. M. de Lagaraye, surprized and moved, lifted him up, and took him in his arms, asked the motive of an action, which his modesty and simplicity prevented his
compre-

comprehending. Madame *Almane* took upon herself the task of explaining it. M. *de Lagaraye* listened with a mild and serene air, embraced my son, and said—"I do not deserve to be
"admired, I am satisfied, the manner of life I
"have adopted constitutes my felicity, and you
"see in me only a happy man."—Then, turning to us, proposed our seeing his house; and offering himself for our guide, conducted us first to the Infirmary, an immense room containing sixty-two beds; disposed in a stile of neatness and even elegance that surpasses all conception. But what appeared to us the most pathetic, was to see M. *de Lagaraye* speak in the most affectionate and consolatory terms to all the invalids, and to hear them bless and thank him with the most lively expressions of tenderness and gratitude. At the sound of his voice we beheld all the curtains half undrawn, and every head throughout the hall raised and bent forward to enjoy the happiness of seeing him. He appeared like a divinity, who deigns to dispense his blessings in person in the temple where he is adored. This hall is lighted by four windows of Bohemian glass, and has two large doors and two chimnies. Testifying my admiration of its grandeur and regularity to M. *de Lagaraye*, he replied,—It is not my building, I made use of it as I found it.—I expressed my surprise at what could have been its former use. He simply answered,—it was a theatre; but being the most spacious, dry and healthy place, I preferred it for my invalids.—Those words, my dear Viscount, *it was a theatre*, what a crowd of reflections did they not inspire! a theatre converted into an hospital!

hoſpital! what an aſtoniſhing change! This man, who was talking to me, clad in coarſe raiment, and ſurrounded by theſe direful and loathſome objects, I figured to myſelf as the perſon, who formerly in this very hall had engaged in the ſweeteſt and moſt elegant pleaſures, and in the miſt of a brilliant and numerous ſociety. I ſaid to myſelf, it could have been only the enthuaſiaſm of an heated imagination, or the boundleſs ambition of raiſing a name, that could have induced him to make ſuch ſacrifices; but yet ſimplicity of manners, and an air of calmneſs, modeſty and peace announce neither fanaticiſm nor pride; *M. de Lagaraye* appears happy, and a munificent philoſopher. Is it poſſible, that theſe mild virtues could produce alone ſuch extenſive deſigns, and ſo ſingular a conduct? Theſe ideas occupied me deeply, and I anxiously wiſhed, if it was poſſible, by a particular converſation to inveſtigate his ſyſtem, and his moſt ſecret ſentiments. In the mean time we left the infirmary; and were conducted by *M. de Lagaraye* to the apotheary's apartment, whom he preſented to us as a man of diſtinguiſhed merit and education; here is a compleat ſurgery, diſpoſed with that order and elegance, which is ſo conſpicuous in this manſion. From thence we proceeded to the oppoſite extremity of the houſe, into a very large room, heretofore a ſaloon; whoſe beautiful carving, gilding, and wainſcot, painted white, yet remains; but it is now furniſhed with ſmall tables and forms ſet in rows, round a kind of pulpit, ſomewhat raiſed, and placed in the centre of the room.—This, ſaid *M. de Lagaraye*,

garaye, is my school, here all the lads of the village, from ten o'clock till noon; and again from three to four in the evening, are taught to read and write, and at seven every night I read a lesson of morality, which I composed and had printed expressly for these children. This work is in two parts; the first for infancy; and the second for youth; *Madame de Lagaraye* has formed an establishment exactly similar for the girls. After this interesting explanation, *M. de Lagaraye* proposed our seeing his apartment, which consisted only of a small bed-chamber, a charming cabinet, a library, and laboratory.—You have seen, says he, what are my occupations; reading, chemistry, the study of physics, and botany, are my amusements; and I protest to you, that during twelve years I have not experienced a single moment of weariness. *St. André* whispered me—Could you have had any idea of what you have seen?—No, surely, replied I; to be known, he must be both seen and heard; he speaks of all he has done with a plainness, which takes away all surprise; and one is even tempted to believe, whilst he is speaking, that it would be easy and pleasant to imitate him; he seems to me purely a philosopher and a wise man; nevertheless I confess, I am at a loss to reconcile the extraordinary sacrifices he has made, with a head so cool, and a disposition so humble as his is. I had foreseen your astonishment, returned *St. André*, and was willing to leave you the pleasure of hearing from his own mouth, by what chain of ideas he was conducted to that point of perfection, at which it is impossible for any one to arrive without a piety equally sublime, and when you are master of
that

that interesting part of his history, I doubt not but your surprise will end in the highest admiration. As he finished these words, *M. de Lagaraye* advanced towards us, saying, the clock strikes; nine is our breakfast hour; will you be of the party? At this instant a female, dressed in the *Lagaraye* uniform, entered the room and saluted us; *M. de Lagaraye* embraced her; I need not tell you this was *Madame de Lagaraye*: he presented her, and she received us with that ease and politeness which characterizes both; and already prejudiced by *Blanche* in our favour, honoured *Madame d'Almane* and *Madame d'Ostalis* with expressions of particular friendship. She is still a regular and striking beauty, and preserves, notwithstanding her age, which is forty-seven, a most extraordinary bloom; her countenance is equally mild and chearful; and her person is so noble and distinguished, that her dress appears only a disguise: she is lively, free, communicative, talks well, and with an earnestness which attracts attention, and gives to her expressions a particular air, that in any other person would seem the height of affectation, but in her is pure nature; and makes her conversation equally animated, agreeable, and interesting. She admires and loves her husband to a degree bordering on enthusiasm, and listens to all the encomiums bestowed on him with eagerness and transport; in half an hour I defined all this, and readily conceived, that loving *M. de Lagaraye* so entirely, a lively imagination would easily lead her to comply with every thing he proposed; but he was still an enigma, and every moment increased my curiosity. We were informed

informed breakfast was ready; *M. de Lagaraye's* apartment is on the ground floor; and he led us through his closet into a little grove, where we found a table loaded with fruit, and the produce of the dairy; the whole society met at the same time, consisting of the two surgeons, the curate of Lagaraye, *Blanche*, and the chymist, whom we had already seen.—Behold, said *M. de Lagaraye*, the companions of our retirement; their sense, knowledge, and better than all their friendship, have for ten years been its chief charm. During the repast the conversation became general, and was both agreeable and lively. Breakfast ended by a walk in the garden, which was all dedicated to the use of the kitchen, excepting a great walk of chesnut trees. *Madame de Lagaraye* resumed the discourse, and pointed out the beauty of the trees and fruits:—All you see, said she, all these useful productions are *M. de Lagaraye's* work; those orchards of various fruits were formerly groves of myrtle and roses, those espaliers were covered with jasmine and honeysuckles; that vast field of herbs was formed into parterres enamelled with a thousand flowers; here we were lost in the mazes of a labyrinth; there lofty hornbeam hedges were reaching to the clouds; nature, every where useless and constrained, presented only the works of art. A wise and good hand destroyed all these monuments of luxury, fit only for the effeminacy of sloth. The enchanted gardens of Armida disappeared, and in their place arose peace, order, plenty and happiness, an abode worthy of the master who inhabits it. Whilst *Madame de Lagaraye* was speaking,

ing, I admired the fire in her eyes, the varied and expressive turns of her countenance. You must allow, that women of real sensibility exceed us by a delicacy, of which we are not susceptible; they have a certain ingenuity in extracting enjoyment from numberless little incidents, which escape or make no impression on our minds; the pliability of their organs make them experience passionate emotions, which we can scarcely comprehend; they have a manner of loving peculiar to themselves; and she, who on her lover's departure, proposed to him to look every night at the moon at a particular hour, enjoyed surely by this engagement a most delicious sentiment, and I am persuaded that hour alone compensated for all the trouble of the day. Tallismans, cyphers, and hair bracelets, all these delicate inventions are theirs, whilst we, who are capable of sacrificing our existence, and too often our glory for their sakes, set little value on what gives them such delight. Our passions are perhaps stronger and more fervent; but their sensibility being moved and attracted more easily, and being more continual and uniform, must certainly procure them enjoyments unknown to man, and happiness preferable to any we can taste. I shall not apologise to you, my dear Viscount, for this digression; your love for women will insure its pardon. But let us return to Lagaraye. *St. André*, as he walked by *M. de Lagaraye*, made him partly acquainted with my astonishment, and the difficulty I found in fixing my opinion of him. *M. de Lagaraye* turning to me, said—If you can spare me a few moments, I can perhaps satisfy

satisfy your curiosity; Madame *de Lagaraye* joining in our conversation, intreated him to give us not only a circumstantial account of his life, but of his sentiments also: he consented, and seated himself on a green bank, shaded by trees, between Madame *d'Almane* and me; the rest of the company surrounded us, and my children took care to place themselves so as to see his face; we were all silent, whilst M. *de Lagaraye*, whose every word is engraved on my memory, addressed us in the following terms:

“ I spent the greatest part of my life in tumult and dissipation; master of my liberty at the age of twenty, and of a considerable fortune, neglected in my education, ignorant how to employ or to conduct myself, I sought for happiness where it never can be found, that is, in vain and frivolous amusements; my heart was cold, or, to express myself more properly, my natural sensibility was stifled by the life I led; yet my brain inflamed me, and led me more astray: I wished to be happy; but having no idea of those pure and tranquil joys, which alone are permanent, I despised and left the advantages I possessed, to search after imaginary delights. At length my eyes began to be open: being weary, disgusted with every thing, having enjoyed nothing, I felt satiety without having experienced those tumultuous pleasures which commonly precede it: I reaped from all these illusions only an importunate remembrance of them, attended by a cruel uncertainty. I searched to the bottom of my heart; and questioning it, I found it feeling; and at length discovered, that to taste of happiness it was that alone
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which I must consult. A new world seemed opened to my view; until then discontented and selfish, I quickly flew from one extreme to the other. To love, and to live alone for the sake of those objects which were become dear to me, such was the new plan of felicity which I had formed. I was a father; I resigned my heart up to the sweetest and most natural affections; I doated on my daughter, till then I knew not happiness. But this happiness brought with it fears and agitations, of which till that moment I had had no idea. At that time, when my daughter by her virtues and her tenderness filled my soul with the most delightful sensations, a horrid thought would poison all my joy; the bare possibility that so pure a delight might be ravished from me; that accident or sickness could in one moment destroy all my present and future happiness. This cruel reflection harrowed up my soul, even in the instant in which I felt myself most blessed."—Here *M. de Lagaraye* paused, remarking without doubt *Madame d'Almane*, who, with eyes fixed on *Adelaide*, could not restrain her tears.—After a moment's silence he proceeded: "Yet my ideas expanding by degrees, I felt all the sweets of benevolence by dispensing happiness around; at first all was pleasing; but soon the impossibility of relieving to the extent of my wishes, caused me to make bitter reflections on luxury and vanity, which robs wailing misery of succour, and compels us to let it implore in vain. Thus was I situated, when an event the most horrid and unforeseen, by taking from me my chief happiness, hastened to accomplish a total change in my

my mind. My daughter, so worthy of our tenderest affection, on account of her virtues, accomplishments and beauty, that dear child, the amiable object of all our cares and hopes, in the midst of a grand entertainment made for her, suddenly fell as if thunderstruck, and expired in our arms. — Imagine, if it is possible, the grief, consternation and terror spread through the hall by this dreadful catastrophe! — Whilst we surrounded the innocent victim, the songs and shouts of joy of the crowd, celebrating at a distance the festival, resounded in our ears. — Horrid contrast, which by making this event appear more extraordinary, rendered it still more terrible!

Relieved from the stupidity a violent despair at first occasions, I abandoned myself to new reflections: What! said I, are these the precious fruits of that sensibility I held so dear? One moment may annihilate all the bliss it gives! — Yet without it this life is only a tiresome and cold vegetation; there is no real good but what flows from the heart: but to attach oneself passionately, to place all one's happiness on a single object, is to expose oneself to grief and troubles, which carry horror in the very thought; love and good works are necessary to our existence; but why confine all our affections to one or two weak and frail creatures. Universal beneficence! that is the virtuous sentiment which inspires the sage; who by strengthening and preserving in his heart this sublime passion, prepares consolation, which will enable him to support the sorrows his particular affections may cause him. It is true, he will
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weep for the loss of his friends; but he will not despair, nor think himself left destitute on earth, whilst there remain misfortunes which he can relieve. Shall life be a burthen to me whilst I can extend protection to the helpless orphan, raise the courage of virtue sinking under oppression, extricate from despair wretches delivered up to misery, vice and death; and change such horrid destinies for pure and serene days; and having it in my power to run an useful, nay glorious career, shall my heart blasted by vain regrets consume in melancholy and despondence the residue of a weak and blameable sensibility? Oh my daughter! you are no more! never again shall I hear from your dear mouth the sweet name of father! nor my eyes be blessed with your sight! I shall no more press you with transport to my breast, that agonising breast which received your last sigh; you are torn from me for ever! but my heart is left me; by consulting that I can still be happy; I shall hear the wretched bless me, as I wipe away their tears and dry up their sources; and I shall feel satisfaction and delight in the gratitude and joy I occasion. These salutary reflections reanimated and eased my spirits; my soul reassumed its former vigour, and rose by degrees to enthusiasm. With a lively fancy united to reason, I at length formed the project of devoting myself entirely to those sacred duties, to which my life has ever since been dedicated. To execute the plan I meditated, it would not be sufficient to renounce the world, its luxuries and vanities: self must also be entirely forgotten and neglected, and the whole

of a large fortune, together with my time, attention, and study, appropriated to the relief of others; I wished to be legislator of a community made happy through my benevolence. Vain of so new a project, I was not insensible to the glory it would bestow; I thought of making great sacrifices, and perhaps a little pride mingling with enthusiasm helped to confirm my resolution. Assured of the heart of Madame *de Lagaraye*, and knowing her love for virtue and for all its dictates, I communicated my ideas to her, in which the strength and sensibility of her soul made her acquiesce with transport. We set out for Montpellier, after having written to our relations and friends our fixed resolves. You know the rest, and I have nothing further to acquaint you with, but the real state of my heart at present. In speculation my projects appeared to require vigorous and even painful exertions, and doubtless that pride I mentioned was necessary to enable me to bear the idea; I am not ashamed to acknowledge, that I expected more glory than happiness: but there is in good works an inexhaustible spring of pure felicity, which imagination alone can never reach, and which I have experienced: deeply occupied in the necessary cares of agriculture, of my manufactures, my inhabitants, and my patients, these objects alone filled my mind and engaged my affections, made me forget the world, and the frivolous ambition of being admired; I returned my thoughts to that supreme judge, who can alone set a just value on man's works; and presumed to believe that some of mine were an homage not unworthy even

even of him;—this thought exalting (as I may say) my mind above the world, rendered me insensible to the deceitful allurements of restless vanity; I proved, that it was from religion alone I could derive courage joyfully to persevere in the enterprize I had formed. But how shall I describe to you the happiness, almost without allay, I have experienced for ten years past, since it is beyond the power of words to delineate it? Judge, if it be possible, from the retrospect of all I have done; I will begin by the manufacturies; as there is no trade which may not be acquired in three years, I have already seen my manufacturers thrice renewed; there are in all one hundred workmen employed; by trebling this number you will have three hundred; their labours are either consumed in the hospitals, or sold, and the profit added to my income. In improving my lands, which step has answered amazingly, and in building, I have engaged near two hundred and eighty more; add to these sixty strangers, who have been received and settled at Lagaraye during eleven years; the stewards, nurses, and servants to the hospitals amount to seventy persons more: I keep an exact account of all the sick cured to this day; there are nearly nine thousand, including those from an hospital of inoculation, not yet mentioned, but which I erected about a quarter of a league from hence. These numbers united comprehend a total of nine thousand seven hundred and ten. My first establishments were certainly very expensive, but the sale of all our furniture, plate, jewels, trinkets, wardrobes, &c. brought the necessary

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sum, and in ten years my revenues are increased more than a third. Although I have attained my fifty-seventh year, I may expect to live still ten years; and then you must nearly double the calculation just now made, which is far from being exaggerated; should I reach seventy-seven years, it will be trebled: how dear and precious does this idea make life to me! Thus having multiplied the bands which tie me to this world, I do not look forward without concern to the awful moment when, by my death, so many will lose their sole support.

I owe my successors the fortune I inherited, and can only dispose of the increase, a sum too inconsiderable to maintain these establishments; moreover leaving hospitals to the care of interested persons, is frequently doing more for the advantage of the trustees, than for the poor; I only order by will, that the sick in these hospitals, on the day of my death, shall remain till they are cured, and a certain sum of money to be given them at their dismissal; and also that the workmen shall be suffered to finish their apprenticeship, I provide for some who have served me faithfully, and leave the rest to Providence. I have nothing left to entertain you with, but a summary account of the inhabitants. In return for procuring them ease and happiness, I require them to be industrious, orderly, and peaceable. I adjust their disputes, for some will always exist in large societies; my decisions have ever met with respect and obedience.—I rebuke with severity all kinds of disorder; and I never suffer idleness; I will have even the amusements active and manly: in Lagaraye there are wine merchants

chants and inns; but not one tipling-house, that is to say, no taverns open to the idle and intemperate; they receive and lodge strangers; but clubs are strictly forbidden; those who infringe this law, by admitting the inhabitants and selling them wine, are banished for ever. On Sundays and holidays the young are encouraged to amuse themselves in various games, such as cricket, swinging, &c. &c. but, it is my absolute command, no money shall ever be played for; wine and cyder are provided at my expence; and not unfrequently, seated with the old men, I am a pleased spectator of these sports: bows and arrows are one of the amusements I have introduced: I give a prize yearly to the most dexterous. In the village are two large spots appropriated to this use; where, beneath trees disposed in the form of an amphitheatre, are benches for the spectators; the old men occupy the first row, and behind them are placed the wives, maids, and children. I have prohibited music and dancing; and this severity, which perhaps will appear unreasonable, has greatly contributed to that perfect purity of manners I so much desired. The lads live separate from the girls; they do not so much as join in their diversions; so there can be no improper familiarities; the young women sometimes dance in circles to the sound of their own voices; they sing and recount ancient ballads, and are present at the public games; such are their pleasures: knowing no other, they do not think it possible to find any more delightful. I had a great deal of trouble in bringing them to this degree of innocence and simplicity; it was necessary to reform the man-

ners of the common peasants, rendered brutal by idleness, misery, and debauchery : but I was insensibly gaining my end, by patience, firmness, exhortations, and reward, when Madame *de Lagaraye* thought of a quicker and a more expeditious means, that of emulation, which is only a desire to distinguish one's self, a sentiment found in every heart, and which leads to virtue, and can sometimes even supply her place. Reason convinced Madame *de Lagaraye*, that purity of manners would ever dwell in well-regulated families ; she therefore proposed I should give an annual prize to good fathers and good mothers : it was a woman who merited the first prize, and a man gained the next ; so it has now been given alternately for six years ; the prize is 300 livres and a silver medal, presented with a great deal of pomp and ceremony, you cannot imagine how sudden and miraculous a revolution it produced ; ale-houses from that moment ceased to be regretted ; husbands and wives became assiduous in their household duties ; both became tenderly attached to their children, reformed themselves by their endeavours to instruct, and set their offspring good examples ; gained to themselves love and respect, by forming a virtuous generation ; and found happiness at home, by fulfilling the most sacred and pleasing duties." Thus, my dear Viscount, did M. *de Lagaraye* open to us a soul intoxicated with the love of virtue. I had still some questions to ask him——Without doubt, said I, your sensibility and benevolence procure you a felicity the most enviable, but still it cannot be without alloy ; every condition has its troubles : for example, that duty to which you particularly
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devote yourself, attendance on the sick, the dismal sight of their sufferings or death must give you the most cruel pangs?—"Those are in fact the only sorrows of my life, yet they are not so poignant as you imagine; the hopes of curing, or at least of relieving their pains, occupy and sustain me; an inactive pity racks the soul, but when we are employed in the hopes of being useful, it becomes a sentiment, which redoubles our strength and reanimates our courage. I strive as much as possible to soften the horrors of death, by proscribing all that mournful pomp which usually precedes it; my mouth never pronounces the fatal sentence; I engage them to fulfil all the religious rites before they are in danger; nor have I the cruelty to strike consternation and dismay into weak minds; I discourse with them on the power and goodness of God; I dispose them to love and not to fear him; I offer them only sweet and consolatory ideas, and flatter myself that peace and security follow them to the grave. How is it possible that a man without education or philosophy, when weakened by pain, can hear with patience the rough exhortation of a priest, who comes to alarm his thoughts and trouble his conscience? Can we believe he will support, without terror and despair, all the mournful preparations for death? those dismal tapers set round his bed, and those agonising prayers * sounded in his ears? No; his senses

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* All these customs are observed still in all the villages and most of the little cities in the provinces. I myself have seen a father by his expiring daughter's bed-side, reciting aloud the prayers for the dying, which begin and
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are bewildered, his heart faints under the black ideas engendered by fear; they poison his last moments; they make those moments dreadful and terrible, and even accelerate them. Is it possible that a religion, the moral of which is as mild as it is pure and sublime, can inspire such madness, and cruelty so absurd? But to finish my answer—From what I have been saying you will understand, that the sight of death is less grievous here than any where else, and consequently that it moves and affects me less than you imagined: moreover, my sensibility for these unhappy sufferers is unconfined, universal, and includes the whole; no choice or preference binds me to one more than another, I love and take care of all, because they suffer; and that same reason consoles me for their death; then if I am so fortunate to save and to restore one to perfect health, it gives me a thousand times more satisfaction, than the loss of the others can give me grief.”—By this answer M. *de Lagaraye* satisfactorily removed all my doubts, I was as perfectly acquainted as himself with his sentiments and situation of mind; the result of this knowledge compelled me to deem him the most astonishing, the most admirable, and the happiest man on earth. Why should such a man be born

end with these words: “Christian soul, leave the world.” What words for the mouth of a father! What horrid madness! It is equally offensive to religion and to humanity. Besides all this shocking apparatus, which can only inspire terror in the dying person, excites also in the attendants the fear and horror of death; a weakness very inconsistent with Christianity, which particularly recommends courage, and prescribes a contempt of life.

in a rank to display only an abridged and small pattern of all the moral and legislative virtues? He ought to have been successor to an Alexander, who, after ravaging and subduing the universe, would have compensated all by leaving it in such worthy hands. What delightful days of peace and felicity history would have transmitted to us? It would at least have given us the idea of perfection, and have assured us of its reality. But other circumstances, and another condition, might have made even *M. de Lagaraye* a different man; all those events he has related, were requisite to raise him to that point of perfection, and produce that crowd of ideas which depended on each other; although he has a soul full of greatness and passion, he does not appear ever to have felt love. He past those days, when the impressions are most lively, in error and extreme dissipation; this time being over, other sentiments filled his heart; but let us suppose he had loved his wife passionately; that that union had never been interrupted by any disaster; his daughter living; he would have been without doubt an affectionate and faithful husband, a tender and anxious parent, busied in his family, in his fortune, and his preferment, assisting his friends and neighbours, a worthy and a valuable man; but he would not have been *M. de Lagaraye*. After these reflections, it is not to be wondered at that great men are so seldom to be met with. Genius, deep and just designs, a vast and cultivated understanding, the fortunate union of all these virtues, would produce nothing really useful, without an happy concurrence of circumstances, and the advantages of rank and fortune.

Here, my dear Viscount, is the account I promised you, which I am persuaded will make a deep impression on your mind: I feel that Lagaraye will be ever present in mine, nor can time blot from my memory any thing I have here seen. We are to-morrow to be present in the school, when M. and Madame *de Lagaraye* instruct the children. I shall write to you again on Friday: Saturday we set out for Brest, there to remain some days, but I shall certainly be at Paris towards the end of the month; and as I shall only stay a short time, I hope I shall find you and all your family there, and that you will not begin your little tour till after my departure for Languedoc.

LETTER IV.

The Baron to the Viscount.

WE were yesterday and the day before with M. and Madame *de Lagaraye*, whilst they fulfilled a duty, which appeared to us not one of their least interesting or useful occupations; in a word, we saw M. *de Lagaraye* surrounded by children, reading moral instructions on the duties of men in general, and of those in their situation in particular. This course of morality, comprised in one little volume, is written with as much clearness and exactness as simplicity; it is divided into chapters, of which he never reads more than one

at a sitting, making frequent pauses, either to question some one of his auditors, or to explain any part he thinks beyond their comprehension. It is really very pathetic to see with what kindness he answers or questions them; and that he may be more clearly understood, adapts his comparisons and expressions to their capacities. The children listen to him with an attention that nothing can disturb. M. and Madame *de Lagaraye* gave me a copy of their respective lectures; I spent a night in reading these two little volumes; the truths and good sense I found there not suffering me to quit them. These works, though extremely simple, appeared to me both interesting and useful; their value is increased by being made for an obscure class, forgotten or disdained by all former writers. The children are admitted into these schools at twelve years of age, and remain till fifteen; the priest having previously instructed them in their catechism; so that a fresh set of twelve taking the places of those who are fifteen, the school is renewed every three years. During the first six months M. *de Lagaraye* reads to them his work, which is succeeded by the gospel, which takes up eighteen months; they then return to M. *de Lagaraye*'s lessons: Madame *de Lagaraye* follows the same process exactly with the girls. I was curious to know whether, in such a number, M. *de Lagaraye* had not found some of distinguished abilities.—“I have, replied he, met with many who gave hopes of wit and knowledge, but I resolved to draw none from their proper sphere, unless possessed of superior and very striking talents. Of such I have found but two in all this time. As

there are many capacities, which the simplicity of my school would suit infinitely better, than one where the beauties of Homer and Virgil are displayed, so these two young men were absolutely misplaced among their companions: I therefore procured them a more distinguished education; one was born with a remarkable genius for the mathematics, and is now become a great geometrician, and settled in a foreign land; the other, named *Porphiry*, son to a labourer in the neighbourhood, was one of my first pupils; I was attached to that child by his meekness and sensibility, and soon discovered in him a most astonishing understanding and memory; he profited so much by the particular pains I bestowed on him, that I determined to send him to finish his studies at Paris; he is now twenty-two years old, and merits, by his virtue, wisdom, conduct, and gratitude, the parental tenderness I feel for him; he possesses as much wit as learning, is passionately fond of poetry and letters, and I am sure he will one day cultivate them with success."—I need not tell you, my dear Viscount, how eagerly I enquired for this young man's direction; I find he spends every winter at Paris, so that I shall certainly see him on my return from Languedoc; for I must be acquainted with the beloved pupil of *M. de Lagaraye*. We set out in an hour, and shall sleep at ——— Our children are quite in despair at leaving Lagaraye; my son this morning imparting his grief to me, I said, "Persevere in this admiration, which does you honour, never forget this great man; and let the recollection of his sublime virtues ever remind you, that it is religion

“ gion and piety alone that can inspire so per-
“ fect a neglect of one’s self; a noble pride, the
“ love of glory, often produces great actions;
“ benevolence and compassion make one perform
“ good ones: but worldly motives never raise
“ us to this degree of heroism and perfection.
“ Instinct teaches us to expose our life to pre-
“ serve that of a fellow-creature: but it is above
“ human nature to devote ourselves for ever to
“ these duties, which *M. de Lagaraye* has im-
“ posed on himself. Man is born good, his
“ first emotions are generous; but his reflections
“ cool, change, and make him selfish; he is in-
“ consistent, because he is naturally an imper-
“ fect and confined being; it is religion alone
“ that can give him a constant taste for virtue,
“ and a perseverance in well-doing. In a word,
“ my *Theodore*, if ever you hear religion con-
“ temned, recollect *M. de Lagaraye* and all you
“ have seen here.”

We dined with *M. de Lagaraye*; and, on tak-
ing leave, *Adelaide* and *Theodore* could not refrain
from tears; for my own part, I must own I
never experienced a more sensible regret than in
quitting them; and left with pain this blest
abode, where the good genius of one man has
restored the golden age, where every step discovers
the prints of goodness and virtue, and the image
of innocence and peace.—The thought, that I
was probably embracing *M. de Lagaraye* for the
last time, that I should never see him more,
affected me beyond expression; the admiration
he inspires is very tender, because he is truly
good, indulgent, and sensible, free from pride
or prejudice, and because his virtues are more
affecting

affecting than dazzling. Farewel, my dear Viscount! My fellow-travellers are waiting for me. Adieu.

L E T T E R V.

The Baronefs to the Viscountefs.

YES, assuredly, my dear friend, I am pleased to find myself in Languedoc; I was happy to see Madame *de Valmont*; my walks in my park, between *Adelaide* and Madame *d'Ostalis*, are delightful to me; but yet my heart is not fully satisfied; I am not perfectly happy; and should be still less so, if I thought it possible you could persuade yourself to believe half you say on that subject: I am not apt to be out of humour, but I own your letter has made me so; and therefore you will not now have the account your politeness made you demand: and I shall only acquaint you we are all perfectly well, and that *Adelaide* cried for joy when she beheld the turrets of the castle, and said that true happiness was only to be found here and at Lagaraye; that Madame *d'Ostalis* rose by break of day to draw the landscape from her window; that *Theodore*, impatient to see all his former walks, went three leagues this morning on foot with *Dainville*; that Miss *Bridget* has left the spleen at Paris; and lastly, that I am very seriously angry with you. Adieu, my dear friend! If you wish for more particulars,
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write me a letter kind enough to make me forget the one I have just received.

LETTER VI.

The Viscountess's Answer.

NO, you do not understand all the privileges of friendship; it even possesses that of being sometimes unjust, and then its vivacity is best expressed: Oh! if it was always reasonable, could it be a passion? It is cold, when never in the wrong You say my letter put you out of humour; you boast without foundation, my dear friend; for, in the number of years I have loved you, it has never been in my power to excite in you the least degree of indignation or ill humour; take not this as a compliment, for it is a very just and serious reproach; it is not consistent with true sensibility always to preserve that equanimity and superiority of reason, for which doubtless you ought to be admired, but by which friendship has often a right to be wounded. Besides, I am sufficiently miserable for you to excuse all my caprices; you have again left me, and what comfort have I when you are away? You know all the uneasiness my daughter and M. de Limours give me, I feel my sorrows more poignantly, as you are not here to share them. My little *Constantia* remains, but she is still such a child! Apropos, I have many questions to ask about

about her. Pray tell me what books of prayer you give *Adelaide*; likewise the name of her confessor at Paris; I am dissatisfied with *Constantia*'s, and intend changing. Let me know also in what manner you prepare *Adelaide* to receive the Sacrament; you have so thoroughly convinced me how important it is to instil true piety into our children, that it now employs all my thoughts and care. I regularly send *Constantia* to mass every day: she follows exactly all the rules for Sundays and holidays; and confesses every three months; she spends Lent in retirement; that is to say, without dining at our table when we have company, or coming into my apartment at visiting hours. Adieu, my dear friend! I am going into the country, to spend two days with a woman who is very prim, very formal, scrupulously polite in her own house, but very arrogant every where else; who thinks it impossible to be fashionable, or have common sense, without the advantage of being admitted into her coterie; she is, in short, as tiresome as she is insipid, vain, and calumniating. As I give you her picture, her name is unnecessary. Before I finish my letter, I must say a word of *Porphyry*. I thank you for introducing him to me: he is really both amiable and interesting, and worthy in every respect of all *M. de Lagaraye*'s affection. He lives with that *Madame de M——*, who has so much wit, and receives so many men of letters; *Porphyry* extols her so highly, that I long to visit her: besides, I am weary of myself, and have an inclination for wit, which I shall meet with at her house. I have always observed, one may be a wit when one will; and I am precisely of
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the age when such a fancy generally takes our sex: therefore expect to find me, on your return, a wit, and perhaps an author. Adieu, my dear friend! and be assured I can never assume any form that will alter my heart in respect to you.

LETTER VII.

The Baroneſs's Answer.

SO then! I do not poſſeſs true ſenſibility, becauſe I am neither ſickle, unreaſonable, peeviſh, nor ſpiteful; becauſe I place implicit faith in you: and you, my dear friend, becauſe you pout without occaſion, and ſcold without reaſon, it is you only that know how to love — this is a fine deſcription of friendſhip! But ſince caprice is one of your proofs of ſenſibility, I ought not to flatter myſelf with being your only friend; — for ſurely you lavish that teſtimony on many. It is thus, that we often attribute to the ſtrength of our ſenſibility and paſſions, faults which proceed only from our diſpoſitions. I never ſaw a lover, who was always jealous without reaſon, that was not naturally ſuſpicious in mixed ſociety. Friendſhip occaſions no caprices; but you are a proof that it does not cure them. Truſt me, we had beſt have done with this quarrel, and love one another as we are, relinquishing the hope of a mutual reformation; we are born never

never to resemble each other, but always to agree.

So you are going to attach yourself to Madame de M——. I am curious to know, what impressions a society so different from what you have always lived in, will produce on you: but I beg you will not give me any account till after the third or fourth visit, that your opinion may be fixed.

Let us now talk of *Constantia*; without doubt, by bringing her up piously, you secure the happiness of both; but it appears to me that the means you employ, are absolutely contrary to the end you propose. In all education, let us first remember to what kind of life the child is destined; your daughter is born to shine in the great world, at Paris, and at court. When she is eighteen and her own mistress, do you think it will be possible for her to go every day to mass, to confess every three months, and to live in retirement all Lent? Certainly not: but, accustomed from her infancy to look on these practices as essential duties, she will relinquish with them all her religion. Have you remarked, that those young people who are brought up in this manner, (as they are in all convents) continue more devout than others? Let us always revert to our most useful principle, never to give our pupil a false idea: let us not suffer them to confound perfection with simple duty. Besides, is it reasonable to exact from a child of nine years that universal rectitude? Do you think that *Constantia*, so often obliged to pass whole hours at church, will be always collected and attentive? Sure I am, that more than once she

has

has envied her mamma, who during that time was in bed, or making visits. On the contrary, you should set your daughter the example of what you make her practise; at the same time you should only require from her the duties which are really essential to religion: I am convinced that is not the most convenient method; for it is much easier to send a child to mass, than to go every day ourselves, particularly when one goes to bed at two in the morning. I only advise you what I have constantly done myself by *Adelaide*: she knows she can never lessen what she now practises, without failing in her duty, and giving a bad opinion of herself; the dissipation and amusements of the world will never prevent us from fulfilling our indispensable obligations; and which do not take up more time than any station in life will allow. You are in the right to be particular in the choice of a confessor; it is a point too often neglected, and yet a most important one; for a confessor without understanding can easily spoil the best teacher's work. I enclose the direction to mine; but advise you to have some conversation with him before you put *Constantia* under his care, and to acquaint him with all her little faults, and her disposition. In regard to the books of devotion you ask about, I cannot satisfy you; and shall again occasion that wonder and shew of anger you always put on, when I own myself authorefs of any treatise on education: I must answer you nevertheless, and tell you that, after having read all the books of this kind, I found with surprize that there was not one 'adapted to young people;' you will readily conceive, for example, that there are many

many books of prayer that you would not only not give your daughter, but be very sorry she knew them; particularly those in which the 'cases of conscience' are very prolix. I have already spoken to you of some prayers I composed during the infancy of *Adelaide*; but besides these I have still another for her youth; it contains the mass, the psalms, and the church prayers, besides those for morning and evening, confession, communion, self-examination, &c. I know not a single book, where one can read these kind of prayers without being continually shocked by false grammar or ridiculous expressions in them. I will, if you desire it, send you a copy of my work, and in it you will also find what I have often heard you wish for, namely, prayers for every interesting situation in life; and I am sure you will be tenderly affected when you read that for a mother imploring God's blessings on her children. You can have but half the volume of prayers, till my return to Paris: the other half contains sentences and detached maxims, extracted from the writings of the fathers. *Adelaide* has had this work in her possession near two years; I gave her at the same time the Gospel and the Imitation of Jesus Christ: and these are all the books she will have till she is fifteen.— You ask how I prepare her for receiving the Sacrament; the first step, you know, was taking her to Lagaraye; and she is come back with so profound a respect for *M. de Lagaraye*, so fervent an increase of piety, that I thought I never could seize a more favourable moment to imprint on her mind all I had to say on that subject. Therefore, the morning after our arrival at

Brest,

Brest, I spent two hours with her alone; when, after much conversation on Lagaraye, she begged to know when she was to be admitted to the communion.—The day you are twelve years old: in six months, if you conduct yourself till that time in a manner to convince me you are no longer a child; for as soon as you have received the Sacrament, you will enter into society, and I shall begin to look on you in the real light of a friend, and place confidence in you. But you well know I am not hasty in my judgment, and that to obtain such a happiness, you must merit it.—Oh! mamma, I shall make myself worthy of it, I dare hope; I am sure, I so much wish it.—I give you notice, it will not be slightly granted; and before you are allowed to partake of the most holy and awful of all the Sacraments, I must be very well assured that you will never oblige me to treat you as a child. If, during these six months to come, you are guilty of any one fault for which I am under the necessity of punishing you, or of imposing a penance on you, I shall think you do not feel its importance, nor the value of the promised reward; and I shall defer it for a year.—A whole year! oh Heaven! and, for one single fault, my dear mamma?—Yes, for one serious fault.—There is justice in that; but I will conduct myself so well, that I am sure I shall not henceforth be guilty of a serious fault. Since this conversation, I have remarked in her a very visible alteration for the better; and I am persuaded there is not a moment in the day, when the fear of committing a ‘serious fault’ is not before her eyes. The great art is to promise children such rewards,

as

as will engage them to a constant self-attention; it is teaching them at the same time perseverance and the command of their passions, the two great means of attaining perfection; for one cannot, during six months, obtain from a child a conduct free from essential blame, without eradicating at the same time all her faults. The choice of the promised rewards is really difficult: promise none but what are interesting, noble, or useful; such as some mark of confidence, your picture, an instructive book, a new master, &c. Do not teach your pupil to desire any thing but what she ought to love, or what deserves to be esteemed.

LETTER VIII.

The Baron to the Viscount.

YESTERDAY, my dear Viscount, my life was in manifest danger; I will give you a recital of this little adventure, as I am sure it will please you, since the conclusion afforded me the highest satisfaction. The river Aude, you know, forms a canal in front of my house; I have had a large tent pitched on the bank, and we frequently go and bathe; my son learns to swim; he comes on surprisingly, and it is one of his greatest pleasures.

Yesterday, the heat being excessive, my son *Dainville*, and I, repaired to the river, followed by my water-dog, that faithful *Mouch*

that you well know. I swam as usual; and after some time told *Dainville* and *Theodore* to return to the tent, and dress themselves, and that I would follow them presently. After they left me, I diverted myself with my dog; when all on a sudden the blood flew violently into my head, and I felt myself fainting. I strove to regain the tent, but my strength entirely failed; and I had only time to cry, 'Come here, *Mouche*,' before I lost my senses. On my recovery, I found myself on shore, and in my son's arms; he was half dressed, dripping wet, his countenance changed, pale, and disfigured; the instant I opened my eyes, he seized both my hands, with a transport beyond description, and pressed them to his breast, cried, sobbed, embraced, and asked me a thousand questions in a breath. He was so distressed and trembling, that my dread of the baneful effects of so violent an emotion made me feel, at first, but imperfectly, the joy that his sensibility caused me. When we were dressed, and returning in the carriage, I desired to be informed of particulars.—“ Scarce had you
“ (said *Dainville*) uttered that dreadful cry, *Here*,
“ *Mouche*, when *Theodore*, who was dressing,
“ burst from the hands of *Brunel*, plunged into
“ the river, exclaiming, ‘*Alas! why did he*
“ *not say, Here, my son?*’ Those were his very
“ words. I threw myself in after him, and
“ caught him in my arms, in spite of his cries
“ and resistance; at the same instant a boatman,
“ by my order, flew to your rescue; we saw
“ you floating, and the dog drawing you by the
“ hair towards the bank. The boatman reached
“ and brought you on shore; and all this past
“ within

“within a minute.” Observe, interrupted I, how natural, or rather instinctive virtues are courage and generosity; judge by the intrepidity of my dog, if the world is to blame in attaching infamy and dishonour to cowardice; and if any one who refuses to risk his life to save his fellow-creature, does not prove himself a thousand times inferior to *Mouche*. And you, my dear *Theodore*, continued I, have done an action I shall always recollect with pleasure.—The action of *Mouche*, replied he, is alone to be admired; mine was only duty.—This idea I perceived was a little painful to him, but I did not let him know it, and continued the conversation:—If you had attained your full strength, and knew as well how to swim as *Mouche*, your observation would be just; but, on the contrary, you are but thirteen years old, and have learned to swim scarcely six weeks; therefore I ought to be very gratefully affected by what you did for me.

I was blooded yesterday, and am perfectly well to-day; and have been bathing and swimming this morning with my son, who would not leave me an instant, lest I should be again taken ill. How delightful it is to be so beloved by the child, on whom the happiness of my life depends! But there is no father who may not enjoy the same satisfaction, if he will fulfil the sacred duties which nature imposes.

Yes, certainly, my dear Viscount, my son is learning mathematics. At twelve years old he began the first volume of *M. Bezout*, which treats of arithmetic; in a few months we shall get to the second; at fifteen he will study the third;
and

and at seventeen the fourth, which treats of mechanics: as I think the study of mathematics should employ six years, three hours in a week is sufficient to dedicate to it. By this method children cannot be fatigued; and let their understanding be never so weak, it is hardly possible they should not learn enough for any station.

I intend also to teach my daughter as much geometry as is indispensably necessary towards raising a plan, and drawing a landscape from nature, and in which the perspective is strictly observed. Latin my son will begin learning this autumn: and I shall use the *Cours de Latinite de Vaniere*, which appears to me a most excellent work; for it has a perfection, wanting in all other rudiments, that of being always intelligible; I am very certain he will understand Latin at seventeen much better than the generality of the world, not excepting those who are esteemed very good scholars. I find another, and in my opinion a very great advantage in my method, that of not disgusting my pupil with works, which are really worthy admiration. A boy who begins learning Latin at six years old, and cannot read *Virgil* at twelve, has lost his time; yet at that age it is impossible for him to feel its beauties: still he learns it by rote; and when he is eighteen, he will know the *Æneid* is a masterpiece; but he will feel it weakly, or at best without enthusiasm. I have made rather a singular remark, that the men who love reading the least, are those who are commonly esteemed to have received the best education: yet it is reasonable it should be so; for at fourteen they have read all the best books without being sensible of their beauties, and only preserve a tire-

Some remembrance of them, which naturally leads them to imagine, that they dislike reading; they therefore renounce it entirely; or if they do read, it is only inferior works, which have at least the pleasing charm of novelty to them; they think themselves acquainted with all others, having learnt them by heart in their infancy. I recollect seeing in my travels a prince only eight years of age, who talked to me an hour together of *Telemachus*: and his governor assured me, that the prince was passionately fond of that work, and had made extracts from every part with his own hand. So much the worse, replied I, this poor child will never have read *Telemachus*. *Theodore*, it is true, is only beginning mathematics, and has not had one Latin lesson; but he is well acquainted with the principles of our own language, without the fatigue of having learnt it out of a grammar; but was taught verbally by me in correcting his spelling; he reads and speaks English and Italian perfectly well, understands a little German, has a general idea of geography, and already knows as much chronology as he will ever want: besides, the magic lanthorn, and various other of his infantine plays, together with *Madame d'Almane's* abridgments, have imprinted on his memory a prodigious number of historical facts; and what surpasses all, his judgment is as solid as his heart is pure; he has clear and distinct ideas on all the principal points of morality, and knows by experience, that the most honest and virtuous path is ever the wisest;—that our inclinations lead us astray; that reason alone should be our guide; and that it is through her alone we can be esteemed, be loved, or be happy. But
the

the bare repetition of all these known truths will make no impression; we must give proofs to fix them on the mind, and then they will never be eradicated. As to accomplishments merely elegant, *Theodore* only possesses that of drawing, which he has a great taste for; and already begins to copy very prettily from nature; as does his sister; Madame *d'Ostalis* renders our little academy very brilliant at present: she is extremely assiduous, and *Dainville*, you may be assured, has yielded to her the president's chair. Adieu, my dear Viscount! pray inform me, if M. *d'Aimeri* is arrived at Paris; you will find him very melancholy, but he has so much merit, that you certainly will be happy in his acquaintance. Give me your opinion of the Chevalier *de Valmont*; it is near two years since I saw him, and that time may have made a great alteration at his age; my friendship for his parents interests me much in his well doing.

LETTER IX.

Count de Rasville to the Baron.

AT last, my dear Baron, I am going to give you the promised description of the Chevalier de Murville's gardens, which my occupations during the last three months have hitherto prevented;—you will not lose by the delay, it being all present to my memory. Three weeks before M. d' Aimeri's departure I took the prince, accompanied by the Chevalier de Valmont, to M. de Murville's, who you will easily believe did not receive the nephew of Cecilia without manifest emotion. After surveying the house, M. de Murville conducted us into the garden*, where he has collected an exact representation of all the most interesting things he has seen in his travels. We went out of the house on to a large irregular lawn, formerly an immense parterre, but now filled with statues and antique monuments faithfully copied, (but in less proportion) from the best ruins in Italy. Amongst others the magnificent temples of Serapis, of Minerva Medica, Trajan's pillar, &c. Various foreign plants of different shapes and colours are artfully interspersed among the ruins. Willows and cyprus shade the tombs; majestic pines and palm-trees surround the temples; laurels grow at the foot of the Apollo of Belvedere; myrtles

* This idea, so beautiful and magnificent, is not new; for the Emperor Adrian had a garden of this kind.

and roses encompass the *Venus of Medicis*. To the right of this kind of museum, there is the grotto of *Pausilipo*; which is a long passage built with brick, but so covered with rock and verdure, that it appears hewn out of the solid stone, like the cavern it represents;—at the bottom of this grotto, one discovers a charming perspective, which conducts you to the lake of Agnano, one of the most delightful views near Naples; and very easily imitated in a garden, being entirely surrounded by trees, which hide the rest of the country; on the other side of the park, you travel in Spain. After seeing all the Gothick ruins which ornament this part, we entered a meadow, divided by a stream, over which he has built a bridge, of a plain but elegant architecture; and here the Chevalier * *de Murville* made us stop:—Observe, said he, this bridge; no monument in the garden better deserves to fix your attention, or retain a place in your remembrance. It is called the Widow's Bridge. A woman of St. Philip's, in Spain, having had her son drowned in a flood, caused a bridge to be built across the fatal torrent, that for the future no mother might mourn a similar misfortune: thus, by a sentiment truly angelic, she derived consolation from erecting an edifice, the sight of which would have redoubled the grief of any other person. There are many actions which appear more brilliant, but none more generous. In short, my Lord, continued the Chevalier, when you read this maxim of

* In the original he is sometimes called Monsieur, and sometimes the Chevalier, and this is agreeable to the French manner, who notwithstanding his title call a man Monsieur, as the Baron *d'Almane* Monsieur *d'Almane*.

M. *de Rochefoucault*, “in the adversity of our best friends we often find something not displeasing to ourselves;” when you hear human nature aspersed, recollect “the Widow’s Bridge.” After this discourse, he led us to the bottom of the garden, where he has a village built in imitation of Broëk, in Holland. You will easily believe, that this is not so spacious as the original; it only consists of fourteen houses in one little street; in the first there is a delightful hermitage and dairy; four others are inhabited by gardeners; and the rest by old servants of his, or poor families which he has extricated from distress, and given an asylum to in this charming retreat. The Prince and the Chevalier *de Valmont* left this delicious abode with regret, where taste has assembled such a collection of interesting and instructive objects. M. *de Murville* was much affected by the adieus of young Charles, and begged permission of the Prince to embrace him; when clasping him in his arms with inexpressible tenderness—Oh, *Charles!* cried he, may you be ever happy! Love virtue; and preserve your heart, if it be possible, from a dangerous passion which perhaps will embitter your whole life!—

The sun was set before we left the Chevalier *de Murville*; and being very near the house of *Alexis Stezen* (the unhappy father of the family whom we settled on the banks of the Lake * * * *), the Prince desired to go there, that he might see if the good people continued happy. Since the affecting scene, which I recounted to you, my dear Baron, three years are past, and in all that time I had not once found a leisure hour to visit them: the Prince’s curiosity appeared

peared so natural, that I consented to gratify it. When we reached the house, it was near dark; and we found the family in the lower room, sitting in a circle (without a candle) amusing themselves in singing historical ballads. We stopt to listen to a voice which was finishing a stanza, and sounded as young as it was melodious. The singing being over, we opened the door: but the darkness prevented our distinguishing objects. A servant announced us; at the name of the Prince they all started up in the greatest agitation! *Alexis* called for lights; his wife and children ran to fetch them; and a moment after our eyes were riveted to one object; it was a young woman of thirteen who entered precipitately with a candle in her hand, which she set on a table. Imagine all the ingenuous graces of childhood united to the bloom and beauty of youth, a noble and slender shape, features equally delicate and regular, an animated countenance full of expression, a smile all innocence and sensibility: figure to yourself this seducing assemblage, and you will yet have but an imperfect idea of this bewitching form. *Alexis* took her hand, and presenting her to the Prince, said, this is *Stolina*, my eldest daughter; that child, to whom you, Sir, gave your cloak. . . . These words made the Prince and the girl both blush; . . . and the former changed the discourse by asking, if we had not heard her voice as we entered. It was indeed hers. The Chevalier begged her to sing again; and *Stolina*, with a modest confusion, which added to her charms, in a trembling voice, sung two verses; which were thought much too short by the Prince and the Chevalier *de Valmont*. I

believe, was my pupil two or three years older, this visit would have been a dangerous one: be that as it will, I left *Alexis Stezen's* house, fully resolved never to take the Prince there again, who could talk the whole evening of nothing but *Stolina*, and the next day was thoughtful and melancholy to a surprising degree for a child of thirteen and a half; but fortunately at that age such impressions can be neither deep nor lasting. Adieu, my dear Baron! and be assured, I highly approve the reasons, which determine you on travelling with your children, and the preference you at this time give to Italy beyond all other countries; but I hope a day will come, when I shall have the pleasure of seeing you in this:—were it not in itself interesting and curious, you would here find a great King, gloriously reigning over a virtuous people; a sight far exceeding all the temples and ruins about Rome.

LETTER X.

The Viscountess to the Baronefs.

OH the charming creature! . . . so interesting a figure! so modest an air! . . . a countenance all sweetness! I lay any wager you guess who I mean:—Well, yes, it is the Chevalier *de Valmont*. Now it will be in vain for you to deny your designs; he must be *Adelaide's* husband;

husband; I saw that clearly on the very first visit. I questioned him very much concerning his travels; all his answers were short, plain, and modest: and then he blushes with so much grace! without being disconcerted at blushing; he is timid, but never embarrassed. Besides, he is so like our amiable *Cecilia*! In short, I am quite infatuated. As to M. d'Aimeri, you may say what you will, my dear friend, but I feel that I can never esteem him; my memory is too faithful to poor *Cecilia*: he may well weep for her, but he is not the less guilty of her death; his sorrows grieve, but can never interest me: however, I desired him to look on my house as his own; and I believe he was satisfied with my manner of receiving him. He goes in a month to conduct his grandson to his garri-son; but they will return hither towards the end of December; therefore you will see them this winter. I positively will be present at *Adelaide's* first interview with the Chevalier, I am certain, sympathy will be visible the first moment; they are made for each other; and will love one another passionately:—Remember this prediction.

Well, my dear friend, I have made an acquaintance with Madame *de M*—; have already been with her thrice, therefore I can now satisfy your curiosity. You insist on a true and circumstantial account:—Listen then; this is what happened on my first visit: I got there at half an hour past eight in the evening; was conducted into a dismal saloon, very ill lighted, where I found a very solemn circle:—the mistress of the house seated me by her; I cast my

eyes on all the company; and saw only two women, and ten or twelve men; and could not find a single face I knew, except *Porphyry's*, whom I call to inform me of the company. He whispers all their names; amongst them three or four, who are equally known and esteemed by their works. I immediately looked on those celebrated persons with an admiration, which inspired me with so extraordinary an emotion of self-love. that it suspended my curiosity; for instead of listening to the conversation, I only felt the desire of being heard myself, and of drawing the attention of those, who ought naturally to have fixed all mine. Here was I then solely employed in seeking an opportunity of saying something witty; I thought a long time, and at last hazarded a very abstruse reflection; and then another still more far-fetched; I grew bold, vehement, and fell into a dissertation; was dull, and all at once found I had not common sense, and that I was compleatly ridiculous. Very much disconcerted at this discovery, I could think of nothing better than to retire; and I went out with the double regret of having been very absurd myself, and of not having heard a word of what others said; I reflected on this accident, and concluded I should never succeed in pretending to wit, and a desire of shining. I resolved for the future to be always simple and natural; and I returned to *Madame de M——*'s with this intention,—but scarcely was I seated, when the frenzy of shewing my wit and knowledge seized me with redoubled fury; at first I courageously resisted all temptation; at length I yielded, and succeeded

ceeded no better than the first time.—I left the house absolutely enraged with myself; and with a firm resolution to observe a strict silence for the future, since it was impossible for me to talk there, as I did elsewhere. Behold me then making my third visit; this time I did hold my tongue: I observed and listened with extreme attention; I heard the company speak sensibly, and remarked several strokes which deserved to be remembered and quoted:—Yet I found the conversation in general languid and heavy; and when it was animated by discussions, it seemed to me degenerating into disputes; in short, it frequently astonished, but never charmed me: and I said to myself, every one of these people have more wit than I, but I am certainly more amiable than they are. What mismanagement then is it that deprives them of the advantage they ought to have over me? After having reflected on this singularity, I discovered, that they had precisely the same madness, which had inspired me the two first days; that they knew not how to attend to others, and instead of wishing to please, sought only to be admired. I also observed them often guilty of little inattentions and rudenesses, either from self-love ill understood, or the want of a knowledge of the world, which alone can teach us to be observant of others, never to be angry, and to maintain one's opinion without peevishness or pedantry. From all these observations I infer, that men of letters should mix more in society; they only go into three or four houses, where they engross almost all the conversation; mildness, complaisance, delicate attentions, in a

word the graces, are not always to be acquired by them; and this is the reason learned men are so often reproached with an arrogant and supercilious manner*; if they were more in the world, they would lose many of their little failings; they would then be met with pleasure, and sought with eagerness. Instead of producing pain and constraint, they would be the delight of society; a thorough knowledge of the world would enable them to describe it; and to give faithful and striking pictures of our faults, our vices, and our manners; and we should find their works replete with wit and modern sentiments. But I will dwell no longer upon these reflections, as *Porphyry* has had a letter from *M. de Lagaraye*, in which that subject is much better explained than I can pretend to explain it. I have leave to send you a copy, which I am sure you will read with pleasure. Farewel, my dear! embrace *Madame d'Ostalis* for me, and tell her I am no longer jealous of her; but I am of *Madame de Valmont*; yes, still more since I saw her son. As the mother-in-law of *Adelaide*, how you will love her!—At least own to me the truth; I am sure you are not sincere on that score.—Alas! you have not that confidence in me, which I have in you. I cannot think, why I love you so much;—I ought only to esteem you. Notwithstanding your easy, natural and unaffected air, you are in reality very proud, and very reserved; reserved beyond expression; Oh you are! and you are even vain of your re-

* It is easy to perceive that the Viscountess, however inconsiderate she may be, speaks here only in general terms, and that she is by no means so destitute of good sense as not to admit of some exceptions.

serve. You call it prudence and discretion; but if you do not confess, that in the bottom of your heart you have destined *Adelaide* for the *Chevalier de Valmont*, I shall think you never loved me, and only have that kind of sentiment for me, that one feels for a child which amuses one.

LETTER XI.

The Copy of M. de Lagaraye's Letter to Porphyry.

WELL, my dear *Porphyry*, you are going to profess yourself a man of letters! I certainly shall not oppose that design. False devotion or bigotry can alone condemn it. You have understanding, a feeling heart, and have read a great deal;—leave then your closet, shut your books, and study mankind; unless you acquire a perfect knowledge of the human heart, you will write nothing but what is trifling or imperfect. See men of all ranks; examine them in all the different situations, from the humble labourer to the exalted courtier. Know them accurately; and *do not despise amiable infancy*. As a painter, copy the striking and natural features it will present; as a philosopher, observe in it the seed, from which spring all the virtues and passions of man. Be particularly assiduous in separating our natural faults and inclinations from that croud of irregularities and vices we derive from education.

cation. A mere scholar should remain in his study: an author should live in the great world.—If he dedicates to society four hours of the day, there will still remain time enough to reflect on what he has seen. But all this is insufficient;—you, my dear *Porphyry*, must still preserve your sensibility and your principles—if your heart and manners be corrupted, you will never produce a work of genius. From wit alone may flow amusing things, those works of a moment, made to dazzle but not to last; received at first with eagerness, praised and quoted during three months; and then consigned to oblivion. It was not to his wit, that *Pierre Corneille* was indebted for his fame;—it was his greatness of soul, that acquired him his surname, and the admiration of his contemporaries, and of posterity. Oh, my *Porphyry*! be honest, indulgent, and beneficent, that thy writings may inspire men with the love of virtue. There will not then be found (in them) exaggeration nor inconsistency; for he who is inspired by love of truth, can never contradict himself. Would you give useful and moral lessons, begin by reforming yourself; subdue your passions, shut your heart against hatred and resentment; learn to forgive: you will then know how to bestow eloquent praises on greatness of soul and generosity. For what a delightful career are you destined; to what a noble vocation your taste and genius call you, if you are sensible of all its dignity! but alas, if you should be led astray; if, too weak to resist the vain desire of temporary fame, you should prove an apostate to truth, and to your principles; if you should suffer yourself to be misled by the spirit of party
and

and faction! Oh, my son! those talents which you possess, they were given you by heaven; they were cultivated by me, not to flatter vice, to amuse the immoral, or to seduce the ignorant; but to obtain the approbation of men of taste and virtue. In fine, my dear *Porphyry*, remember that the season, in which we can work and write, flies rapidly away. When that is past, what happiness will be yours, if you can say, "I have never written any thing, but in conformity to reason and truth: humanity and the love of order and of virtue inspired me. I sought only pure and spotless glory: at least in the hour of death, at that awful moment, when the recollection of one good action yields a thousand times more satisfaction, than the most brilliant successes, how sweet will be the thought, that my works will never be productive of dangerous consequences; that a young man at his first entrance into the world may read them with advantage, and that the enlightened and tender mother will be eager to give them to her daughter." This, my dear *Porphyry*, is what ought to be your ambition, if you would answer my expectations, and justify the tenderness I feel for you. Farewel! I expect you towards the end of the month.

L E T.

LETTER XII.

The Baroneſs to the Viſcounteſs.

I THANK you, my dear friend, for the accounts you have given me of our little *Conſtantia*. I am ſorry ſhe is ſo careleſs; it is a fault too little attended to. Yet it occasions a great loſs of time, and is frequently the cauſe of more expence than prodigality itſelf. I have corrected *Adelaide* of this fault, natural to all children, by puniſhments, provided the thing loſt was abſolutely to be replaced; or if it was a thing of entertainment rather than of uſe; a play thing for inſtance, by making her long wiſh for ſuch another, before I gave it her; and at laſt by giving her a large cheſt of drawers, in which ſhe might lock up and ſet all her things to rights. But read *M. de Fenelon* * *ſur l'Edu-*

* Make your daughters obſerve that nothing contributes ſo much to œconomy and neatneſs, as keeping every thing in its proper place. This rule appears trifling, but would be very efficacious if ſtrictly attended to. You never loſe time in ſeeking any thing you want, there is neither trouble, diſpute, nor embarraſſment; whatever you want will be ready to your hand. . . . Add to theſe advantages, that of removing from your ſervants the ſpirit of idleneſs and confuſion.—Moreover, it is a great thing to render their ſervices quick and eaſy; and to free ourſelves from the temptation of being frequently offended by the delays occaſioned from things being in diſorder, and conſequently long in finding.

Education of Daughters by *M. de Fenelon*.

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cation des Filles, and there you will find all the advice necessary on this subject.

I shewed my children a melancholy sight this morning; and I will presently give you my reasons for so doing. My gardener's daughter died last night; she was pretty, and only twenty years old. I was told of it, when I was getting up, by Mademoiselle *Victoire*, who added, that she was just come from sprinkling her with holy water, that she had seen her face, and that it was not in the least disfigured. This particularity being confirmed by many people, I resolved on shewing her to my children. When we were all met for breakfast, the gardener's daughter was talked of, and Miss *Bridget* said she had never seen a corpse; *Theodore* and *Adelaide* repeated the same;—I proposed our going to the gardener's as soon as breakfast was over; we went; on entering the chamber, I observed *Adelaide's* countenance change; we all knelt down; and our prayers ended, I approached the bed, lifted up the cloth, entirely uncovered the face of the deceased, which I could not look on without feeling an inexpressible anxiety of mind; from the thought, that she was an only daughter, and that her parents survived her. . . . Taking *Adelaide's* hand, I said to her—See, my child, that affecting object; it can only inspire compassion.—Really, she replied, there is nothing hideous in it; I had formed quite a different idea; but I now see that many disorders are more disfiguring than death itself. After some reflections on this subject we returned to the castle. I have forbid all farther mention of the deceased before my children, and took care to entertain them that whole

whole day in the most lively manner.—I remembered in my infancy having heard many stories of ghosts, &c. I was absolutely frantic with that kind of fear, which, although the most absurd of any, has the greatest effect on the imagination. At thirteen or fourteen I determined to see a corpse; unfortunately it was that of an old man, horridly disfigured. This hideous object made such an impression on me, that it was more than a month before I could get it out of my thoughts. Age and reason at last cured me of those ridiculous apprehensions, which had but too much influence on my health, and brought on that nervous disorder which still affects me. *Adelaide*, thanks to my care, never had any idea of those vain terrors. But as she had not seen a dead person, I was fearful her imagination might represent it as much more terrible than it often really is; I therefore determined to shew her the corpse of this young woman; and I applaud myself so much the more, as *Adelaide*, before she saw it, was agitated and trembling; and that she looked upon it without alarm, because she found it infinitely less frightful than she had imagined. *Adelaide* and I often walk in the environs of the castle; and generally in the dusk of the evening return across a church-yard, where we sometimes sit and rest ourselves; and converse, (at least *Adelaide* does) with as much ease, as if we were in a meadow.—Great address and apparent simplicity are necessary to accustom a child to all these things; for they will be most afraid, when they suspect you mean to embolden them. Therefore you must use the utmost precaution;

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but, above all, remember every thing you do for this purpose must appear the effect of chance.—
Adieu, my dear friend! *Adelaide* makes her first communion in a fortnight. Madame *d'Ostalis* set out towards the end of the month, I shall soon follow her; for we shall certainly be at Paris by the beginning of November at farthest.

LETTER XIII.

Madame d'Ostalis to the Viscountess Limours.

CERTAINLY, Madam, I am here as much instructed as entertained. I learn of the best of mothers the value of those duties, which she fulfils with so much delight. Living with her, and observing her in the midst of her family, we see her so perfectly contented, that all our astonishment at the sacrifices she has made, in order to arrive at such pure felicity, entirely ceases. Such is the power of real virtue! At a distance she dazzles and excites our admiration and astonishment; but when near us, she is so beautiful, so interesting, and so persuasive, that the advice she gives ceases to appear difficult or painful to follow; she then does more than dazzle us, she penetrates our hearts, charms and attracts us.

Adelaide and *Theodore* this day received the sacrament for the first time. After our return from church, my aunt retired with *Adelaide* and me into her closet, and, seating herself between us, she took one of her daughter's hands, and putting

thing it in mine, said,—Now I flatter myself you will look on *Adelaide* as your friend. It is true, she has neither your experience nor your understanding; but you well know she would not have been admitted to the sacrament, was I not perfectly sure she is no longer a child; therefore we can now talk before her without constraint, and trust her with our most secret conversations. At these words *Adelaide*, quite softened, leant gently on her mother's shoulder, and tenderly clasped my hand, which she still held: my aunt continued her discourse, thus—I am now going to reap the fruits of those cares I dedicated to you, my dear *Adelaide*. I shall never more be compelled to impose penances on you, or humiliating punishments. You will now become my most pleasing companion, and my tenderest friend. . . . On pronouncing these words, my aunt could not refrain from tears. *Adelaide* threw herself at her feet; and with an expression and sensibility as earnest as it was natural and affecting, said to her happy mother all that the best-founded gratitude could inspire. Although you, Madam, accuse me of envying *Adelaide's* destiny, yet this kind of jealousy does not prevent my asserting, that there is no child of her age to whom she can be compared; and in these last six months she has made a most surprising progress, which ought entirely to be attributed to that extreme desire she had to take the sacrament. What I can never sufficiently admire, is the manner in which my aunt knew how to gain her affection; though overlooking nothing, but punishing her severely, and reprehending her before all company; and yet, in spite of this apparent rigour, she is passionately

passionately beloved by her daughter, who places an unlimited confidence in her. She is never perfectly happy but with her mother; and I always observe, she prefers conversing with her to every pleasure accommodated to her age. This is without doubt the great secret in education, and never to be obtained by spoiling a child, and indulging all its whims. *Adelaide* being now admitted into the "company of rational people," she is for the future to assist my aunt in all family affairs; the maitre d'hotel and cook are to bring their account-book to her every morning. This will teach her (let her fortune be what it may) never to look on these very necessary cares as below her notice; which most women neglect only through idleness, or want of abilities. Ignorance is commonly envious and slanderous; and would, if it were possible, vilify every thing which shows its inferiority; it strives to conceal its shame under the appearance of carelessness, and even often of disdain. This is the reason why we frequently see learned and reasonable persons derided by fools: and this is the cause that *Madame de G . . .*, who never knew one rule in addition, makes such a joke of women, who are so unemployed that they can find amusement in casting up their servants bills. Adieu, madam! I depart in eight days. I do not expect to find you at Paris; but, I flatter myself, you are assured my first care on your arrival will be to seek you, that I may inform myself of your health, and give you an account of my aunt's.

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LETTER XIV.

The Baronefs to the Vifcountefs.

NO, my dear friend, *Adelaide* does not yet read any of the books you mention. Although ſhe has as much ſenſe and reaſon as is poſſible at her age, yet there requires a great deal more to make her feel the merits of the good authors of the age of *Lewis XIV.* As yet ſhe has read very little but what I have compoſed for her. But now we are going into longer and more inſtructive leſſons. She has begun *Rollin's* Ancient Hiſtory; which will be ſucceeded by thoſe of Rome and France; then the Age of *Lewis XIV.* and ſome Engliſh hiſtorians; and this will finiſh our courſe of hiſtory, containing in all fifty volumes. As to works of amuſement, we are at preſent reading ſome plays. In three years we ſhall have read *Campiſtron*, *Lagrange*, *Chancel*, *Lachauffée*, *Deſtouches*, *Marivaux*, *Les Pœſies de Fontenelle*, *de Pavillon*, *de Deſmahis*, &c. All theſe pleaſing, but ſecond-rate authors, will amuſe her, till an age in which her taſte will be ſufficiently formed to read, with tranſport, books of true genius. We laſt night finiſhed the tragedy of *Andronicus*; and, in ſpite of my remarks and criticifms, *Adelaide* was drowned in tears, and aſked me if it was poſſible to form a more intereſting and affecting piece.—Yes, doubtleſs, replied I, you yourſelf will be convinced of that when you come to read thoſe im-

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mortal authors, *Corneille*, *Racine*, *Voltaire*, *Crevillon*, &c. who are at present known to you only by name.—But, mamma, since a moderate performance makes such an impression on me, what pleasure would a tragedy of *Corneille*'s give me! and why deprive me of it?—It is precisely the transports and admiration you profess for *Andronicus*, which proves you not yet worthy to read *Cinna*. Was you sensible of the faults of *Andronicus*, you would be scarcely affected by what has made you shed so many tears; and for the same reason *Cinna* would not move you, because you could not feel his sublime beauties.—But, mamma, *Les Horaces*; I am sure I should be struck with the beauties of that.—How so?—The day before we left Paris, Madame came to see you, and brought her daughter, who is exactly my age.—Well.—Why, mamma, this young lady made me a visit in my room, and told me she was just come from the play; it was *Les Horaces*; and she spoke of it with delight.—So much the worse for her; since it proves only that she unites affectation to ignorance.—At what age then may I read *Racine* and *Corneille*?—When you have understanding sufficient to discover the faults of those we now read.—I perfectly comprehend all those in *Andronicus*.—Yes, because I pointed them out to you: that will not do: you must know and be struck by them, without my being obliged to explain them.—Oh! how impatient am I to read those charming works, which I hear spoken of with so much applause! But, mamma, you surely have all these books: I have even read their titles in your catalogue, but I do not
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see them in the library : where then are they ?—In the presses in my room : I took them out of the library, when I gave you the key.—Would it not have been sufficient to have forbidden me to read them ?—Certainly, you are convinced I depend on your obedience and integrity. If I doubted it, *Adelaide*, could I love you ? I was only desirous of sparing you the mortification of having daily before your eyes so just a subject of regret and curiosity.—But, mamma, you have promised to take me this winter to the play sometimes : I shall then see some pieces of *Racine's* and *Voltaire's*.—No ; I shall not go on those nights.—You will then chuse only the indifferent ones.—Yes, all those which are in your own list.—How sad this is ! So we shall not see any new plays : I shall never be at a first representation.—Be comforted : I may take you to some without inconvenience. You see, my dear friend, from this conversation, the desire *Adelaide* has to know all those interesting works, which it is necessary she should read with attention. Judge, then, if she will not read them eagerly, after having wished for them so long ; and how I shall enjoy her surprise. All you tell me of *Constanzia's* sensibility does not surprise me ; I have in myself a proof how susceptible she is of tender attachments : but permit me, my dear friend, to repeat to you, that instead of endeavouring to render her sensibility more lively and passionate, you should strive to suppress it. You had a slight fever, and did not see her for two days. She was in despair, cried, and would not eat : they were obliged to bring her to you ; and she was quite sick with grief : yet you had the cruelty

cruelty to applaud yourself for having inspired such an unreasonable tenderness, and which might have had the most dismal consequences to that charming child. Suppose you were to have a tedious and dangerous illness, what would become of her? Were you to be separated for months, how would she bear your absence? And you neglect correcting a weakness, that may make her life miserable, because it flatters your vanity. Is it thus a mother ought to love? Oh! it is from the virtues and felicity of *Adelaide*, that I expect my happiness! The maternal should be the most disinterested of all affections, since it cannot expect an equal return. For that same reason it ought to be more lively than friendship, more powerful than love; that alone can suffer, and sacrifice all, with the certainty of being rewarded but by halves. Brothers, friends, and lovers may feel a mutual affection; but did ever the best-educated daughter love her mother to the degree she was beloved? The disproportion of age alone, and the idea that the child will of course long outlive the parent, must make a prodigious difference in their sentiments. Let us not require from our children a tenderness equal to that we feel for them. I possess at present the first place in *Adelaide's* affections: but she will one day have a husband, children, a daughter What then would be my folly to expect to maintain that preference! I would have her feel for me the same affection now, which I may reasonably expect from her always. I wish her to leave me with regret, but without tears; see me in a slight fever, and not fall sick of sorrow. In short, that her tenderness, being

founded on gratitude, should be sincere and unalterable; but that reason should guide all her thoughts and actions. And you, my dear friend, by allowing your daughter to love you without measure, and almost to folly, soften her heart, and dispose her to abandon herself blindly to those dangerous passions, from which it is your duty to guard her. You instil excellent principles; but what will they avail, if she does not at the same time acquire an empire over herself? Are we not agreed, that a woman of strong feelings can never be happy? Vehement passions will lead her astray, or make her miserable through life. She must either be a slave or a victim to them. Teach then *Constantia* not only to resist, but to conquer, hers. You will say, she will have no unlawful ones. Alas! can you answer for that? I hope and believe so, and that she will love her husband passionately; but who can assure you she will be as passionately beloved? And if that is the case, may she not feel all the fears and horrors of jealousy, justified sooner or later by a change which will reduce her to desperation? Recal to your mind all we have said heretofore on this subject. *Constantia*, I aver, is inexpressibly dear to me; her disposition is as engaging, as her person is charming; but if you do not moderate the excess of her sensibility, her virtues will depend on chance and circumstances, and she will never enjoy pure and permanent felicity.

LETTER XV.

The Viscountess to the Baronefs.

O H, my dear friend, how much I want you ! my situation becomes every day more painful :—My daughter ! But you shall have all these melancholy accounts when we meet ; it is impossible to write them. M. de Valcy too gives me all the uneasiness in his power. I now see him very seldom ; but I am assured, he is ruining himself by gaming and foolish expences ; and that he is passionately in love with a dancer just come on the stage. You will feel into what difficulties this state will lead him, and what a prospect I have for my daughter !—and what encreases my trouble, is, that she appears absolutely insensible not only of her husband's conduct, but of the loss of her own reputation. It is true, all circumstances seem to unite in prolonging her errors and her blindness. Notwithstanding her glaring imprudencies, she is sought after and well received ; without doubt they abuse her when absent, but she is not less in fashion ; and this makes her think, that her birth and accomplishments allow her to act with impunity. We must admit one thing, that in our time, that is to say, fifteen years ago, the world was infinitely less dangerous to a young woman than it is now. A beauty must then have been very strict in her conduct to be received in it.—What formerly would have cost a young person her reputation,

is now scarcely taken notice of. Women appear alone at twenty, receive all the young people of that age at their houses, have their private boxes, where they are alone with men, or at least without a *chaperon*; and the same is allowed at the balls after the opera, where they are sometimes accompanied only by a female servant. Any one of these things in our day would have dishonoured and made a young woman the town talk. Custom familiarises every thing. Then there was no having a lover without exposing oneself to a thousand dangers; to receive them at home was impossible; and very difficult to make an assignation elsewhere. It was then necessary to have recourse to means, which required more assurance than the generality of women are capable of. Thus bashfulness and fear frequently stopt those, whom virtue alone would not have withheld. At present there is no such thing as being talked of, or disgraced; and it appears to me equally difficult intirely to preserve, or to lose one's reputation. Thus liberty, degenerating into licentiousness, manifests itself in every action and discourse; our taste is as much corrupted as our manners. We see young people, who have been in the world six or seven years, boasting publicly of their irreligion; considering impiety wit, and atheism philosophy. Modesty is now esteemed only a ceremony, required in a circle, but utterly renounced when one is not surrounded by fifty people. In a word, this revolution is remarkable even down to the female dress. I cannot bear to see them on the public walks, and at exhibitions, without necklaces, their hair flowing on their shoulders,

shoulders, disordered and without powder ; with their dress at once so negligent, and so studied ; and all this after spending three hours at a toilet. —I think the men ought to be less attracted by these affectations of negligence, and abandoned airs, than by these noble and decent dresses we were obliged to wear in our youth. Oh, my dear friend ! what a cruel thought it is, that *Adelaide* and *Constantia* are on the eve of entering a world so full of dangers ! How shall we arm them against all these perils, or how prevent them from availing themselves of the ready path to error and destruction ? Can I behold with indifference what passes in the world ? All that I observe, affects me ; and I bear a part in all, since *Constantia* is to spend her days in it. Trifles, follies and singularities are no longer subjects of derision and pleasantry to me. I am now really afflicted with what used to divert me : I have also lost all that gaiety, for which I was so envied. Reason is of no value to me, since she has robbed me of all the graces I was possessed of ; she is only becoming to those, who have always been guided by her ; and thus it is, that she sets so well on you, and so awkwardly on me. Adieu ! my beloved. Madame *d'Ostalis* arrived in perfect health last Monday : she assures me, that you will be here towards the end of November : but I dare not flatter myself, and will not expect you till December.

LETTER XVI.

The Baroneſs's Answer.

ALL your obſervations, my dear friend, are perfectly juſt. It is very true, that the world is infinitely more dangerous now, than it was in our day: but I think a young woman well born and educated may very eaſily avoid all the rocks it preſents. The greateſt is certainly, as you remark, the exceſſive liberty which cuſtom has granted to all young women for ſome years. But when my daughter enters the world, ſhe will certainly poſſeſs a clear underſtanding, ſound principles, purity of heart, diſcernment, noble ſentiments, and a great deſire to diſtinguiſh herſelf by her conduct and virtue. I will then give her this picture of the world, which you have drawn ſo correctly, and will ſay to her, “Remember that the liberty
“ young women now enjoy, prejudices their
“ reputations much more, than it can aſſiſt
“ their pleaſures: never avail yourſelf of it, if
“ you would wiſh to be eſteemed irreproach-
“ able.” But, you will aſk me, are you very ſure, that in ſpite of faſhion and example *Adelaide* will have the courage to follow this advice? Doubtleſs ſhe will; or all I have done for her, will be loſt and uſeleſs. I will go farther and aſſert, that ſhe will follow this advice without conſtraint, and even with delight. When one is truly virtuous, and firmly re-
ſolved

solved to continue so; in short, when one is totally free from coquetry, one pays a due respect to all the laws of decency, because none of them will then appear troublesome. Did you ever see a beauty dread the clear light of the sun? Neither does unsuspecting innocence avoid witnesses, or shrink from observations. Therefore my daughter will not go secretly to the balls after the opera with her chambermaid; at twenty she will have no private boxes; she will never go unaccompanied by a woman older than herself; nor will she be met on horseback, attended only by a groom, &c. When one has no intrigues, it is very easy to make such slight sacrifices as these to our reputation. Besides, do you set no value on these noble and satisfactory pleasures of being distinguished oneself, and not confounded in the senseless croud of flirts and coquets? To conclude; the contagion is not so general, but we may still name many examples, and models worthy of imitation. I dare boast of Madame *d'Ostalis* as one. Madame de *L* . . . yet older (but still young) has she ever made one false or imprudent step? With so noble and engaging a figure, so much life and bloom, has she even given room to say any man was in love with her? Her modesty has so many charms, that at one time all the young women attempted to imitate her bashfulness;—but unfortunately “Blushes are not voluntary:” so that this fashion was of very short duration. There are many other young women as conspicuous for their conduct as their accomplishments; amongst others Madame de *P* . . . who with the most seducing wit, the most charming countenance,

and all the sprightliness of youth, has nevertheless established a reputation, which envy itself never dared to attack. These examples ought to convince you, my dear friend, that it is very possible with a good disposition to escape all the dangers you dread so much for *Constantia*. Educate her well, continue your attention to her, and have no fear for the future.

LETTER XVII.

Madame d'Ostalis to the Baronefs.

I HAVE already told you, my dear aunt, that I had seen the Chevalier *de Valmont*, and how amiable he appeared to me; but I can now speak with more certainty, as I supped with him yesterday at Madame *de Limours's*. Madame *de Valcy* was there; and I never saw her more adorned, lively, and brilliant; all this was not without design, and perhaps not without success . . . The Chevalier is very young, and inexperienced . . . Yet I thought I could perceive he was more astonished at, than seduced by her coquetry . . . Ah, if he could but look into futurity, and foresee the happiness designed for him, if he knew how to deserve it! . . . He would I am sure escape all the snares preparing for him! . . . He drew near to me after supper, and made enquiries concerning you with an eagerness, that affected me. He asked two
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or three questions about *Adelaide*; and when I told him she was prodigiously grown and improved; indeed I believe he blushed, but I am sure he sighed. Madame *de Valcy* came and interrupted us, offering him a card for whist; and he left me, to play with her, all the remainder of the evening.—I could not discover, if Madame *de Limours* sees into her daughter's schemes. She has naturally a great deal of penetration; but then she must be quite unbiaſſed; the least degree of interest will blind her. There are moments, when she even persuades herself, that Madame *de Valcy* has only imprudencies to reproach herself with;—for example, she firmly believes her as well received in the world as ever. With high rank, youth, and an husband who will be offended at nothing, we are not wholly banished from society. Madame *de Valcy* is pretty; she dresses well, dances admirably, and graces an assembly; she is invited to all the balls and suppers: this will last, till age obliges her to leave off feathers, flowers, and dancing:—On these depend all her consequence; but in other respects she continually experiences all those humiliations, to which bad conduct exposes itself. There is not one new-married woman, who will appear with her in public. Even those women who receive her at their own houses, carefully avoid every advance towards intimacy. In short, all the mothers-in-law, and mothers who dread that kind of connection for their daughters, treat her with a disdain frequently amounting to rudeness. She is perpetually seen making advances, either coldly received, or openly rejected; bearing all these

slights without daring to complain, and seeking to revenge herself by scandalising all the women, who enjoy an unblemished reputation. She has just lost (at least for a time) her friend, *Madame de Germcuil*, whose husband, less careless than *M. de Valcy*, is out of humour; and, after exposing himself and making a great clamour, has taken her to an estate sixty leagues from Paris. He (it is said) intends returning towards the end of the winter; but will leave her in exile at least two years.

Adieu, my dear aunt! I have begun the portraits of my two girls, and you will certainly find them in your closet when you return. *Seraphina* is a little spoilt by my mother-in-law, who was too much diverted with her frolicsome disposition; and this has greatly increased it: but *Diana* continues all mildness and good humour. I myself teach them music and drawing. Being both of an age, and learning together, they have a great deal of emulation;—a sentiment I shall encourage as much as possible, as it is very useful in proper hands.

LETTER XVIII.

The Baroneſs's Answer.

I SHALL be at Paris within three weeks at farthest, my dear child; and I write by this courier to inform the Viscountess of my intentions
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of travelling into Italy this spring. I beg you to wait on her and explain my reasons, for it is impossible to make her comprehend them by letter.

Let us now talk of your children. Use your utmost endeavours to correct *Seraphina* of that frolicksomeness and spirit, which may so easily degenerate into downright malice.

Montaigne has said, "and what father is so foolish to take as a good omen, his son's striking a servant or peasant, who does not defend himself. This is the real seed and root of cruelty, tyranny, and treason." *Rousseau*, in the first volume of his *Emilius*, makes a similar observation; "if a child dares give a serious blow to any one, be it a servant, or any very inferior person, make them return his blows with interest." I have seen simple governesses animate the fury of a child, encourage it to fight, suffer themselves to be beat, and laugh at its weak blows, without thinking that they were so many bruises in the little fury's intention; and "that he who strikes in his childhood will grow up an assassin." Therefore punish *Seraphina* severely for the very first malicious act; be particularly careful never to laugh at any of her tricks, or repeat them as jokes before her; for vanity is more powerful than the fear of punishment. The pleasure of amusing others, and of being talked of, will make her defy all the chastisements in the world. It is of great importance to convince children, that what is bad is hateful, and can only inspire contempt. But when you punish, and at the same time laugh at their fault, they may reasonably believe there are engaging vices, which can even contribute to

make persons liked. This pernicious idea has spoilt more than one character. You know *Madam Clarence*; she owes all her faults to the desire of appearing keen; because she is persuaded, that a mild person is always insipid. We must have very little sense to believe, that beauty, meekness, and complacency, are incompatible with other accomplishments; and that bluntness, caprice, and contradiction, can be graceful, and supply the place of understanding.

I also recommend to you, my dear, never to avail yourself, but with the utmost precaution, of the dangerous stimulus of emulation. Take great care of making them envious of each other. If ever they are infected by that dangerous sentiment, their hearts will be corrupted without remedy. To preserve them, be you always just. A merited encomium excites envy and hatred only in hearts that are intirely perverted. For example, if *Diana* discovers that you think she does not love you as tenderly as *Seraphina* does, she will certainly feel a jealous sorrow, which will make her dislike her sister. There is no child in whom this idea, with or without foundation, does not inspire an extreme jealousy; even in those who can hear their brother or sister praised for accomplishments they do not possess without envy. Natural justice persuades us, they bestow on us only that degree of affection they think us capable of feeling; and at that innocent age they prefer the happiness of being beloved to the vain pleasure of being applauded: for this reason the child who would enjoy the commendations given

to her sister, cannot support the thought of that sister's being more beloved. Convince your daughters, that your heart knows no partiality, and that you believe them equally affectionate. Be equally just in your praise and blame, and your decrees will never produce animosities. Should you be weak enough to shew the slightest preference on account of trifles or personal advantages; if, for example, you should caress *Diana* most because she is prettiest, or appear to delight most in *Seraphina's* conversation because she is wittiest, you would raise a jealousy, that would annihilate all the qualifications they derive from nature and your attentions. I see clearly from the accounts you send me, that the *Chevalier de Valmont* will be enamoured of *Madame de Valcy*. From the opinion I had formed of his heart and understanding, I could not have thought he would have been so easily ensnared by a coquette. Alas! if he is vain, if he is weak, all is over; nevertheless I must own to you, I shall not relinquish, without regret, a plan, which, in spite of me, has engrossed me ever since I have known him: I studied him well in his infancy, he was so promising! His grandfather and the Count *de Roseville's* letters were so full of encomiums! His person is so pleasing! In short, I shall see him, I shall observe him myself; and assuredly I shall be able to form a decisive opinion before I set out for Italy.—To conclude, be particularly careful, that *Madame de Limours* does not perceive the interest you take in him; for she will easily guess the reason, and it is a secret I shall never confide to her. Even if the Che-
valier

valier answers my expectation, if I carry into Italy the hopes I have conceived, I would not have my daughter entertain the slightest suspicion of my designs. The thoughts of matrimony should not only never occupy for a moment a young woman's thoughts; but she should be inspired with a belief, that it is very possible she may never be married. A condition ceases to be loved, which we know we are soon to change. Moreover to make known to your daughter the husband you design her, is authorising her to place her happiness on a project, that a thousand events may defeat; but even supposing it should be realised, such a confidence would always be imprudent. It must naturally inflame her imagination, raise her ideas, and give her up to the seducing illusions of the most dangerous of all passions. You know *Madame de Limours*; in common occurrences her secrecy may be depended on; but it is impossible for her not to betray those for whom she is interested. She has so much sensibility, that it is impossible not to be attached to her; but she is too imprudent to inspire confidence. When her heart takes but little part in what is told her, she gives proofs of discretion and reserve that can withstand all trials; she is then impenetrable; but when the secret gives her either grief or joy, it is so legible in her eyes and countenance, that the least clear-sighted person may discover it. Thus by a most uncommon caprice, of all her acquaintance her intimate friend is the only person who should not trust her. Has she been able to keep the secret of the intended match between *Theodore* and *Constantia*? I am certain
that

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that even her child knows it. Thanks to my precautions, *Theodore* is still ignorant of it; but I may perhaps not be able to conceal it from him as long as I would; however, such a discovery is attended with much less inconvenience to a man than to a young woman. Farewel, my dear child! I will write to you again before I leave this place.

LETTER XIX.

The Baroneſs to the Viſcounteſs.

I HAVE, my dear friend, something to tell you; which I own hurts me much; and I even feel I ſhall not have reſolution to talk to you myſelf of a ſcheme, which, believe me, will coſt my heart as much as yours. I am again obliged to ſeparate myſelf from you, and for a long time. I ſhall ſpend the winter at Paris; but we ſet out in the ſpring for Italy, not to return for eighteen months. You will doubtleſs ſay, that my children are very young to travel; yet you muſt allow their reaſon far exceeds their years. Moreover, it is neither men nor laws that we are to ſtudy in Italy; my children will acquire a taſte for the polite arts, and perfect themſelves in drawing. Whiſt they amuſe themſelves in admiring the monuments and ruins of Roman grandeur, they will gain a complete knowledge of that intereſting hiſtory. In ſhort, my ſon,
conducted

conducted by a father, whose tenderness can only be equalled by his knowledge, will learn to write a good journal, and insert nothing frivolous; in a word, reap all the fruits of travelling. I shall bring back *Adelaide* at fourteen, an excellent musician, an adept in drawing, talking and singing like a native Italian; and entirely divested of all those little feminine delicacies, which nothing but travelling can radically cure. She will neither fear the sea, nor bad roads; sleep as well in an inn, as in her own apartment. She will learn to be contented with a bad supper, and to do without a thousand things she now looks on as absolutely necessary. I also see in this project many more advantages than I can enumerate in one letter, but which you shall be informed of, and I am sure will feel their importance. Do not, my dear friend, add to the grief I experience in separating myself from you, the chagrin of seeing you fretful and unjust. Do you think I have not occasion for all my courage to resolve to leave you and Madame *d'Ostalis*? But can I refuse any thing to my children? Farewel, my dear, my real friend! for Heaven's sake, do not write during your first emotions: spare me those reproaches, which will afflict my heart, without relieving yours. Adieu! I set out in a few days: write not to me, I beg; wait my arrival; hear me before you complain or accuse me.

LET-

LETTER XX.

The Chevalier Herbain to the Baronefs.

I MUST absolutely, Madam, ask you the reason of Madame *d'Ostalis's* conduct and behaviour. I can no longer bear it; she is become quite unfociable. I allow she has still many good qualities: she has sense and sweetness; she speaks ill of nobody; she seems to blame nothing she sees; but there is great hypocrisy hidden under that apparent mildness, or, to speak more properly, she has a manner of criticising still more severe than detraction; for she censures not by her words, but by her actions. I am going to relate a few anecdotes, that will convince you to what a height she carries her dissimulation and malice. It is about three weeks ago, since I took a little trip into the country to visit Madame *de R—*, where I found a good deal of company, and Madame *d'Ostalis*: She behaved pretty well for the first twenty-four hours. After dinner the men went to billiards, and the ladies retired, and shut themselves up in a little closet, to untwist * gold at their ease. Madame *d'Ostalis's* complaisance made her quit her own embroidery to read aloud foolish novels, which must have tired her, and which none of the rest attended to. One day, that we were all assembled in the hall before the hour of walking, Madame *de R—* suddenly observed, that the fringe on my coat would be excellent for untwisting; at that instant her

• Parfiter.

sprightliness

sprightliness induced her to cut off one of my tassels. I was directly surrounded by ten women, who with an enchanting grace and vivacity, stripped me, ran away with my coat, and put all the fringes and gold bindings into their work-bags. Madame *d'Ostalis* alone did not condescend to take the least bit, alledging, that she did not understand untwisting: but she laughed heartily, and seemed to think it a very good joke. I own to you her deceit exasperated me, and I resolved to unmask her. I immediately dispatched my valet de chambre to Paris; who brought me the next day a superb cloak for a woman, full trimmed all round with an elegant gold fringe. I carried it into the hall. At the sight of the cloak, all the women arose. I avoided them; and approaching Madame *d'Ostalis*, said to her, Madam, as you are the only one who has not robbed me, nor would have any hand in the plot on my fringes, I give you all this gold as a reward for your honesty. At these words I presented her the cloak. Madame *d'Ostalis*, looking on this pleasantry as a severe reproof on the rest, blushed, and told me, laughing, she did not understand untwisting, therefore my present was of no use to her. . . . Nay, Madam, I have seen you an hundred times untwisting M. *d'Ostalis*'s shoulder-knots, and your own trimmings. This reply embarrassed her still more, as she clearly discovered my intention of giving a public proof of her nonconformity with the manner of thinking of all the world, even in the most insignificant things. Her situation was distressing. One of her whims is, never to accept (particularly from a man) either gold or silver, under whatever form it could

be offered; yet she did not chuse to affect a delicacy that might offend ten women. At length recovering from her distress, and resuming her open and lively countenance: I tell you once more, said she, I no longer untwist; I have intirely quitted that work for embroidery; therefore I will not accept a very pretty thing, which would give me little pleasure: but sell it us, that is to say, let us raffle for it. This proposition, which pleased the whole assembly, confounded me. Madame *d'Ostalis*, without deigning to listen to me, valued the cloak, had the lots made, took one, and distributed the rest; put the money into my hat, and settled the raffle. Fortune gave the cloak to Madame *de R—*, who was perfectly satisfied with the conclusion of this adventure, and found this joke just as good as the preceding. The next day I desired an explanation from Madame *d'Ostalis*: Wherefore, says I, do you refuse a present, which every other woman not only would accept but solicit? Madame *de L—*, whom you meet perpetually, does she not make all the men of her acquaintance present her with golden dolls, dogs, laces, and even new gold thread? The Ladies *G—*, *de C—*, *de R—*, &c. have not they all the same madness? . . . Very well; but I have not . . . Do you then blame those women? . . . Me! not at all; I have, on the contrary, a very good opinion of all those you have just named, particularly Madame *de R—*, for whom I have a great friendship, and believe her possessed of the noblest sentiments . . . And you think it *very noble* to be continually asking presents, for no other intent but to sell them? For example, yesterday, instead of pulling off my gold,

gold, would it not have been more honest; natural, and sincere, to have asked for ten Louis-d'ors? . . . Believe me, if Madame *de R*— had thought a moment, she would not have subjected herself to your censure; and I might have been guilty of a similar folly, had I received a different education. . . . This last reply, I own, touched me; for I ought to allow, that by excusing in others, the faults she herself is incapable of, Madame *d'Ostalis* displays a frankness which convinces one she thinks as she speaks, and that the indulgence she grants is as sincere as it is estimable.

But it is far from my intention to commend her; so let us resume the subjects of my complaint. On my return to Paris, I supped with her at Madame *de Limours's*. Madame *de Valcy* and two more women came in at ten o'clock, and told us they were come from the *Variétés Amusantes**; that they had seen *Ferome Pointu*, *Eustache Pointu*, and *Le Fou raisonable*†. The world is full of the fame of these pieces; and every one in the party extolled them with enthusiasm, except Madame *d'Ostalis*, who was perfectly silent. At last we questioned her, and she was obliged to own that she knew none of them. Although these plays are new, yet all Paris knows them by heart already: it is as shameful not to have seen them, as it would be extraordinary never to have been present when *Phædro* or *Cinna* was performed. She was laughed at by the whole company. We unanimously intreated her to go the very

* *Variétés Amusantes*, a theatre in the nature of *Sadler's Wells*.

† Little farces acted there.

first opportunity. Two or three women pressed her to fix the day, and engaged to secure a box. Madame d'Ostalis, to rid herself of our importunities, promised to attend them in two days, 'provided she was not obliged to go to Versailles' on that day. But on that day she did go to Versailles; and at the instant I am writing to you, Madam, she knows no more of *Jerome Pointu*, *Le Fou raisonnable*, &c. than what she has learnt from common report, which can convey but a very imperfect idea of them; for the most brilliant sallies are precisely those which cannot be quoted in conversation. I thought myself obliged to talk to her again on this subject: Acknowledge, said I, that you will not go to the *Variétés Amusantes*, because you have been told they are not strictly decent; yet you are fond of the French comedy, and there you often see acted such pieces as are very free: all *Dancourt's*, for example! . . . Did they act only those, I should not go; for then this diversion would be disgraced, and one could not appear there without incurring a character, which of all others a woman should avoid, that of indelicacy. Besides, do you think the most licentious comedy indecent as the master-piece of the *Variété Amusantes*? . . . Oh! certainly not; but all the world goes there . . . I could name several women, who have not been seduced by example; the Ladies de L—, de Cr—, and doubtless many more whom I know not. Moreover, should it be absolutely a universal fashion to go, I should only be still more tempted to refrain, as I should distinguish myself the more by not following it. — What, Madam, do you think of this excessive vanity, in a young person

apparently

apparently so unaffected and modest? Such pride is still more disgusting, as it is by no means the fault of the present age: one may assert, without flattery, that excepting a slight pretension to particularity in dress, their humility is striking; they have not the least desire to distinguish themselves: all women are alike, speak and act in the same manner; and surely, if one may judge by their conduct, they are not desirous of admiration. As for Madame d'Ostalis, I must own she gains her end; she distinguishes herself; she enjoys a great reputation; she is so mild, consistent, and obliging, that those who envy, cannot hate her; she has sincere friends; she is adored by her husband and family: but in spite of all these apparent advantages, the singularity of her conduct exposes her to all the bitterest strokes, with which detraction and calumny can oppress a young woman. For example, they accuse her of wanting wit, because she is neither scornful, coquettish, nor capricious; they set no price on her attachment to you, to her husband and children; and they assign her having no lover to her want of sensibility. These outrages extend still farther: although the men think her both beautiful and charming, the women only say *she has beauty*; an expression which malice has invented, signifying, *regular features without the graces and allurements*; others maintain, that she has no elegance nor ease in her shape, &c. In short, Madam, you cannot conceive how they ridicule her; and this you must allow she draws on herself, by a conduct which becomes every day more uncommon, and consequently more insupportable. My attachment to you

you, and my liking for her, have engaged me to speak to you with a freedom, which, I dare flatter myself, will not be displeasing. Farewel, Madam! let us know if your return hither is put off, or if we may still hope to see you towards the end of the month.

LETTER XXI.

Madame d'Ostalis to the Baronefs.

THIS letter, my dear aunt, may perhaps never reach you; as I suppose you are already on your journey; but in case you should not, I cannot help writing some anecdotes in which you are interested. Madame *de Valcy* has broke intirely with Mr. *de Creny*: she has all at once made an acquaintance with Madame *d'Olcy*, the Chevalier *de Valmont's* aunt; she sups there three times a week, and all the world says, it is solely to meet the Chevalier; in short, her attachment to him is known to every body but Madame *de Limours*. M. *d'Aimeri* perceives it, and has spoken of her coquetry to M. *d'Ostalis*; the Chevalier has hitherto behaved surprisngly well; I believe he thinks Madame *de Valcy* very pretty; but her advances certainly shock him, for he does not return them in the least. She begins to assume a different character towards him: she has quitted that gay air, and jesting manner; she affects a soft melancholy, and an inattention
to

to all around; these manners are more dangerous, and may very probably seduce an inexperienced youth of sensibility. But you, my dear aunt, are coming; and my uncle can give the Chevalier the best advice, which I hope will prevent him from being duped by all those artifices, which are set at work to deprive him of his liberty. You will not find him here on your arrival: M. d'Aimeri hurries him from Paris, designedly no doubt. They set out to-morrow on a visit to a relation in Picardy, and intend staying a fortnight. I must own to you, he appears to leave Paris with regret. He dined to-day at my mother-in-law's: his departure was talked of, and I was sorry to observe the conversation seemed to give him pain.

I was yesterday, for the first time in my life, at a party at blind-man's-buff, at Madame de Clarence's; for it is proper you should be informed, my dear aunt, that for six months past, instead of giving balls after supper, it is the fashion to play at blind-man's-buff, *Traine Ballet*, &c. You will naturally imagine, that these childish amusements are unpremeditated, and that they only spring from the sprightliness of a small and select company: no such thing. You receive a card of invitation to *Traine Ballet* a fortnight before-hand, and frequently from a person with whom you have no particular connection, as in the instance of me and Madame de Clarence. I went yesterday to her house at half past nine, dressed for blind-man's-buff, that is to say in a *Levite*. I found eight or ten young ladies, as many young men, and five or six mothers-in-law: all this company, seated in a dull circle, appeared

appeared to wait without impatience the appointed hour for playing, which is not till after supper, for they cannot resolve to discompose their dress till near midnight; a disposition which ill agrees with the mirth, which ought to belong to these parties. *Madame de Valcy* and the *Chevalier de Valmont* were at this supper; she affecting to mind nothing, but sunk in a profound reverie; yet from time to time seeking him with her eyes, and casting looks at him equally mild and deceitful At length it strikes eleven—the mothers-in-law sit down to whist, and the romps begin; then were several attachments revealed, which were hitherto unknown, or merely suspected; the blinded person is seen to attempt catching only her, who engrosses his affections; feigned or real embarrassments on one side; eagerness, folly, and coquetry on the other: all these hasty emotions discover, to the least discerning, all the little intrigues of the party. The game was very animated; all ran and screamed, except two or three indifferent persons; but innocent mirth is the only mirth that is true and sociable; by making a vast noise, and playing the fool, it may be counterfeited, but cannot be inspired: to *M. d'Ostalis*, the ladies *de S——*, and myself, the entertainment was intolerably dull; and *Traine Ballet*, which you have seen us enjoy so much in the country, could not enliven us an instant. I own to you, I was insupportably distressed every time I was compelled to hunt five or six young men, whom I scarcely knew; and I certainly struck them very awkwardly with the handkerchief, and I received their blows with

still more disgust. A general riot concluded this charming evening: the tables, chairs, &c. were overturned: twenty bottles of water were thrown over the room; in short, I retired at half past one, sinking with fatigue, benumbed with blows, leaving *Madame de Clarence* absolutely hoarse; her gown torn in a thousand pieces, the skin stripped off her arm, and a contusion on her head; but applauding herself for having given so gay a supper, and flattering herself it would be all the talk next day. I trust my dear aunt is assured, I shall be no more seen at these noisy assemblies; and that I should not have appeared even at one now, had I been two or three years younger. Adieu, my dear aunt! Be so good as to send the faithful *Brunel* to inform me of the day you propose to be here, that I may meet you.

LETTER XXII.

The Baronefs to Madame de Valmont.

—— Paris.

I Arrived the day before yesterday, Madam; and can as yet give you no intelligence of *M. d'Aimeri*, nor of the *Chevalier de Valmont*; they are still in Picardy; but I this day received a letter from *M. d'Aimeri*, which informs me I shall have the pleasure of seeing them in four or five days at farthest. Every body, that knows the *Chevalier*, is delighted with him; and they praise him equally for his accom-

accomplishments, understanding, sweetness, and good conduct. It is much to be wished, that M. *d'Aimeri* may not leave him to himself for two or three years to come; that is to say, that he may attend him till that time as he has hitherto done. M. *d'Aimeri* does not love company; but we are not permitted to follow our own taste till we have fulfilled our duties; and we cannot think of living for ourselves, as long as we can be useful to our children.

I received a visit yesterday from Madame *d'Olcy*. The Chevalier's success in the world insures to him, from her, not only the affections of an aunt, but those of a mother; that was her expression. She gave me to understand, that she had already a view to settle him. It seems to me very early for her to busy herself in that matter; and, I own, it would not be Madame *d'Olcy* who should determine my choice; for I imagine she sets very little value on personal merit, and none at all on the advantages of a good education. In an affair, on which depends the happiness of one's life, it is my opinion, we ought not to consult those who would be led and determined by vanity alone. I send you, Madam, the books you desired; and add a new one, which is much admired. It is the first production of *Porphyry*, that young man you have heard me mention so often, as educated by M. *de Lagaraye*. This work appears to me worthy your attention; and although it is modern, you will read it more than once with pleasure. The style of it is pure and natural; there are no obscure, far-fetched, and ambiguous phrases; nor those striking inaccuracies, which at once dis-

cover the bad taste of an author. It is well known, that the best works have their faults and weak parts; but an author, who knows how to write, will always possess clearness, truth, and that style which suits the subject of which he treats.

LETTER XXIII.

The Baronefs to Madame d'Ostalis.

ALAS! my dear child, notwithstanding the wish of us both, you were not witness to *Adelaide's* first interview with the Chevalier *de Valmont*! M. *d'Aimeri*, who was not to leave S— till the 20th, arrived here last night, and visited me this morning. *Adelaide* had just left me to go and write. I was alone in my closet, when, all at once, M. *d'Aimeri* and the Chevalier were announced. This last name raised in me a kind of emotion, which must have discovered my secret to Madame *de Limours*, had she been present. We must not value ourselves on our prudence, for there are moments when the most cautious women are very indiscreet.—But to return to the Chevalier; I am equally pleased with his deportment, his countenance, and his manners. After a quarter of an hour's conversation, M. *d'Aimeri* asked me to let him see *Adelaide*: I rang directly, and ordered her to be called, and she came running in directly: but
perceiving

perceiving M. *d'Aimeri* and his grandson, she stopped all on a sudden with an embarrassed air, made a low curtsy, looked simple, and blushed in a very particular manner. What emotion was it made her blush? was it shyness, surprise, instinct, or foresight? This is what perhaps we may never know. You will readily imagine my looks were directed to the Chevalier at that instant, and I was very well satisfied with the impression I saw on his countenance. He looked on *Adelaide* with as much pleasure as curiosity, and I am certain he was charmed with her. Madame *d'Almaine* came into my closet, and pressed M. *d'Aimeri* to stay dinner. When we rose from table, M. *de Aimeri* went up to *Adelaide*, and told her, the Chevalier *de Valmont*, recollecting the taste she shewed in her childhood for natural history, made a collection of choice pebbles during his travels; "and my grand-son," continued he, "not daring to presume to offer them to you himself, has intreated me to present them." At these words, M. *d'Aimeri* took a large box from the Chevalier, containing a most beautiful assortment of the rarest stones, and besought *Adelaide* to accept them. My child, at a loss, sought counsel in my eyes: I made a sign of approbation, and the box was received with a little confusion, and much gratitude. I repeat it again, I am quite enchanted with *Charles*. It is impossible, at eighteen, to be formed more amiable, and at the same time to have more reserve and simplicity; but his heart is no longer his own, I am certain. He is melancholy, and inattentive; he is thoughtful, and sighs. In short, he is passionately in love; and I am sure,

from all you have told me, and from what I have seen myself, it can be only *Madame de Valcy*. I own I am more afflicted at the choice than at the sentiment!—Alas! if he is really in love with *Madame de Valcy*, he never can love *Adelaide*!—I am indeed too sure *Madame de Valcy* has infatuated him. I was dying to talk to him of her; and I found a very natural opportunity. You know, that one of the prettiest miniatures you gave me represents *Madame de Limours* and her two daughters. Painting was the subject of conversation; and I said, that the best portrait I had ever seen was one you drew of *Madame de Valcy*. This speech made him blush, and put him quite out of countenance; I appeared not to take notice of it. When he was a little composed, I sent for the picture. *M. d'Aimeri* applauded it highly: as for the Chevalier, his admiration deprived him even of the fear of betraying himself; he contemplated her image with a rapture, which (I will not hide it from you) occasioned me as much surprise as displeasure. I cannot conceive how so manifest a coquet, with such free behaviour, so moderate an understanding; a woman, in short, whose whole merit consists in an agreeable figure, could inspire so deep an impression. A young man's first attachment generally decides his character and his principles. What then must we think of the delicacy of his heart, who makes so despicable a choice? Moreover, a man always judges of all women from one, that is to say, from her he has most loved: and it is usually the object of his first affection which fixes his opinion in this respect. I should be much concerned, if
my

my daughter's husband had an ill opinion of women in general. Therefore you see, that if *Charles* is really attached to *Madame de Valcy*, he will cease to be suitable to me. I shall regret it much, I confess; but we shall see. I will not relinquish a hope, which is become more dear to me, since I have seen him a second time. Adieu, my child! *M. d'Ostalis* told me to-night, that you may perhaps stay at Versailles till Thursday. I beg you to send me word what day you positively will return.

LETTER XXIV.

M. d'Aimeri to Madame de Valmont.

AT length, my dear daughter, I am acquainted with *Charles's* sentiments; his 'secret' is no longer such to me; and assuredly your surprise will be as great as mine at the unexpected avowal. You was informed of the real motive for my journey into Picardy. I was desirous of separating him from *Madame de Valcy* for a short time, flattering myself, that the necessity of talking of her would induce him to lay open his heart to me; but my hopes deceived me. *Charles*, melancholy and thoughtful, sought solitude, avoided me, and, for the first time in his life, seemed to fear being alone with me. Walking with him one day alone, I began talking of *Madame de Valcy*, and I men-

tioned her with contempt. *Charles* did not betray the least emotion. So profound a dissimulation afflicted, as much as it surprised me: but wishing to see to what a length he would carry it, I resolved to urge him no farther; and returned to Paris without having obtained the confidence I so anxiously desired. The day after our arrival, that is last Monday, we waited on *Madame d'Almaine*; and there it was *Charles* betrayed himself intirely. She shewed us a picture of *Madame de Valcy*, painted by *Madame d'Ostalis*. His confusion at the sight of this picture was so visible, that it certainly could not escape the penetrating eyes of *Madame d'Almane*.—I felt the necessity of an immediate explanation. I went into *Charles's* room the next morning, as he was rising; I sent away his attendants, and sat down by his bed-side: “*Charles*, says I, “it is time to break a silence which afflicts and “distresses me. As your governor and your “father, I come to demand a secret, which I “could not obtain as your friend; it is no “longer a confidence I require; you have lost “the opportunity of bestowing that. I have, “in spite of you, read your heart; now at “least I expect sincerity; but remember, that “in this instance the slightest dissimulation will “rob me for ever of the only hope of happiness “Heaven has left me.” At these words *Charles* was too much affected to be able to speak, seized my hand, and pressed it between his; he trembled, and I myself was greatly moved.—We were some minutes silent: at last *Charles* resumed the discourse.—I might fear to own a folly to you; but could you think me capable of dissimulation with

with you?—Nevertheless, I have had cause to accuse you of it more than once: but be that as it may, you are in love; you have delivered up your heart to a passion the most criminal; and what conflicts have you sustained to defend yourself, or overcome it?—In never seeking, and even avoiding, the object which gave it birth.—But you meet her every-where: hitherto, indeed, you have received her advances with proper reserve.—Her advances! what say you? of whom are you speaking?—Of whom! why of Madame *de Valcy*—At these words his face flushed with anger and disdain. Madame *de Valcy*, cried he! who, me! what, I love so despicable a woman! Ah! cease to deceive yourself: the sentiment I feel is more excuseable; but it is yet more dangerous.—Ah! who is then the object which inspires it? What! can it be Madame *d'Ostalis*? At these words he cast his eyes down and blushed; and by that tacit avowal filled me with an astonishment, which you no doubt will share. I felt at the same time a secret joy, which I concealed with difficulty. I interrupted a pretty long silence, with saying, Well, what hopes have you?—I have none.—If you think so, my child, you deceive yourself: love never exists without hope. I can easily conceive that you are a little frightened by Madame *d'Ostalis*'s reputation; but you have a kind of flattering hope, that a sincere passion, an unshaken constancy, will meet their reward at last, especially in a form like yours.—No, no; I have too high an esteem for Madame *d'Ostalis*.—Well then! are you firmly resolved never to mention your passion? Have you promised yourself to leave her ignorant

of it for ever? No such thing: on the contrary, at the bottom of your heart you have perhaps fixed the moment to declare your sentiments, and you think she will give you credit for your discretion in concealing it so long; but this pretended discretion is only an artful policy, an additional snare, which you prepare in order to surprise her the more readily; such are the chimeras which seduce you. Ah, *Charles*! should you be so unfortunate as to believe there is no such thing as chastity! I believe that of *Madame d'Ostalis* to be as solid as sincere.—Why then would you wish to corrupt it?—I only desire her compassion.—Vain error! you disguise your real intentions even to yourself. Search the bottom of your heart; examine it strictly, and you will be terrified at its situation. I have but one more reflection to make: if *Madame d'Ostalis* is (as I firmly believe her) truly virtuous, the delusive hope you have nourished can only serve to render you miserable: if, on the contrary, she owes the preservation of her reputation to circumstances rather than to principles, you may possibly destroy it; but in this supposition can you look forward, without trembling, to the dreadful abyss into which you will plunge her? Reflect on the happiness she now enjoys, admired by all her acquaintance, cherished by a virtuous husband and family, who look on her as their glory and felicity. Are you capable of the cruel design of robbing her for ever of a bliss so pure? You love her to distraction: well then, if that is true, reverence her duties, her reputation, and her happiness; conquer this mad passion, which, if known, can only make you ridiculous.—Ri-
diculous!

diculous! is it possible to be so by loving the person in the world the most worthy to be adored? —By daring to appear in love with her, you will display a rashness which no man has hitherto shewn. Besides, recollect the disproportion of age; she is twenty-six, and you only in your nineteenth year; she is a mother of a family, and I cannot yet even think of settling you. This idea alone ought to convince you of the folly of an attachment, which your reason would readily cure, if you sincerely desired it. . . . Our conversation ended with *Charles's* reiterated protestations to follow my advice with a scrupulous exactness. To deal sincerely with you, my dear daughter, an attachment for so estimable an object cannot give me any serious uneasiness: the disproportion of years necessarily opposes its duration. *Madame d'Ostalis* is still in all the bloom of beauty; but in four or five years she will cease to rank amongst the young. Oh! if our hopes do not deceive us, before that æra *Charles's* heart will beat with a more fortunate passion! —From the knowledge I have of *Madame d'Almane's* character, I am convinced she has turned her thoughts more than once on *Charles*; and I am very certain that education, conduct, and personal charms, will take the lead in deciding her choice. If it be true that she has formed any such designs, I am persuaded nothing will more effectually destroy them than the idea of your son's feeling a real passion for a woman of *Madame de Valcy's* disposition. Therefore I think it absolutely necessary, though *Charles* must not know it, to tell her the whole truth, and undeceive her in this respect. Was the charming *Adelaide* but

two years older, *Charles* would soon experience inconstancy; he was so struck with her grace and figure, that it would be very easy for me to turn his heart to love. Oh! could my eyes, before they close for ever, but behold this desirable union, I should die contented with my fate, notwithstanding all the woes I have suffered. Farewel, my dear child; I shall talk to *Madame d'Almane* to-morrow, and give you an account of our conversation.

LETTER XXV.

Count de Roseville to the Baron.

I Willingly subscribe, my dear Baron, to all you have advanced concerning the female sex. I believe I could name more than one mother, who could educate her son as well, and perhaps better than the best father, or most able governor. What man durst pretend to equal them in delicacy and art, whilst women elevate themselves to virtues which ought to characterise us, courage and greatness of soul? I agree with you, that no education can be perfect, which they have not either directed or polished; but this rule holds good only in some cases; and here is doubtless the most striking difference remarkable in the two plans of education, for a subject (let him be of ever so exalted a rank) and for a Prince who is born to reign.

reign. It is of consequence to your son's happiness, that he should have an advantageous opinion of womankind in general; it is particularly the desire of pleasing them, that will make him appear amiable; it is their good opinion alone that can make his life agreeable, and retain him in good company. The wife you choose for him will certainly merit his affection: it is therefore necessary he should have a great esteem for, and an entire confidence in her; but a monarch is not born to live in what we call the great world. Women cannot contribute to the success he ought to desire; his glory and happiness depend solely on the esteem of the warrior, of the magistrate, of the virtuous citizen; on the voice of the nation, and his people's love. The wife that will be given him, will not be chosen for personal qualifications; political motives alone will be preferred; she may be, perhaps, rough, cruel, and imperious; perhaps may add a vain desire of governing, to the greatest imbecility. It is therefore necessary for a Prince to be resolved never to be governed by her.—In fine, I do not attempt to inspire my pupil with a disdain for women in general; but I would have him know how to distrust them, and that he should be convinced of a truth, (of which I myself am convinced) namely, that they should never be admitted to great affairs. They may equal us in sense, but very rarely in prudence. Endowed with less sensibility than they are, after our tender years we are secure from those sudden and violent emotions, which the female sex so often suffer; causing faintings and hysteric fits, by which they instantly discover the most important secrets.

secrets. The weakness of their constitutions, the flexibility of their features, the expression in their eyes, the involuntary blush raised by the least surprise, the delicacy even of their complexions, which makes those blushes still more visible and remarkable; every thing in short conspires to make their first emotions known. In a word, I cannot look on them as better designed by nature to be the depositaries of state secrets, than to command armies. I know that women have gained battles, and reigned as gloriously as the greatest Kings: But I only speak in general, and am ready to admit many exceptions; the history even of our own times would furnish more than one example. The Abbot *Duguet*, in his *Institution d'un Prince*, judges infinitely more severely of women than I do; and I even deem his picture of them an unjust satire, dictated by ill humour rather than truth. This dissertation, which is as long as ungallant, finishes thus:

“ The court, where they have power, insensibly degenerates into a palace of pleasures, diversions, frivolous occupations; where luxury, gaming, love, and all the consequences of those passions reign. The city quickly imitates the court, and the provinces soon follow the pernicious example. Thus a whole nation, though formerly ever so courageous, is weakened, and becomes effeminate; avarice and the love of pleasure supplant the love of virtue. It is therefore necessary, in order to discard all favour, cabals, venality, interest and passion, never to grant to the women the least share in government. They will be modest and reasonable, when they are commanded; but they

“ corrupt

“ corrupt both court and state, where they command.”

You will without doubt ask me, how I propose to preserve my pupil from their seduction. I do not flatter myself with the expectation of securing him from the power of love: but I am sure, that this dangerous passion will never govern, though it may sometimes lead him astray. He agrees with me, that no woman can be so prudent as a man; he will retain all his life this idea, which I have imprinted on his mind, not only by reasons, but by all the proofs I could collect. I found means to inspire him with two causes for mistrust instead of one. I did not content myself with telling him, that women in general were fickle, indiscreet, that they loved talking, and boasting of secrets confided to them. I added, there are nevertheless some irreproachable in all these respects; but still they are women; and consequently liable to all those indiscreet emotions, which astonishment, fear, grief, or joy ever produce in them. They will not tell a secret confided to them; but they involuntarily betray it. Thus though the cause is different, the effect is always the same. Similar discourses, repeated from his earliest youth, could not fail producing the deepest impressions; particularly when they were elucidated by examples; and such are not scarce in a court. An event has just happened here, which has furnished us with many reflections on this subject. A lady of the court, equally celebrated for her behaviour and beauty, dined at the Count *de * * ** with fifty people; her husband came in just as the company were sitting down to dinner, and said aloud, that the
Baron

Baron *de L*—— had just fallen from his horse, and broke his leg.—As he finished his recital, he cast his eyes on his wife, and saw her turn pale, change countenance, and at last faint away. This fatal imprudence of a too sensible heart deprived this hapless woman of her reputation, the esteem and friendship of her husband, and all the tranquillity of her life. Many people pretend that she is innocent, and that the secret she has betrayed is unknown even to the object of this violent passion. This adventure has struck the Prince very forcibly, and confirmed him still more in the opinion I have given him of women. We had on this occasion a long conversation on love.—It is a very dangerous passion, said the Prince.—Yes, replied I, for weak characters; therefore its empire is so great over women.—Has it most empire over the women?—Certainly; for they frequently sacrifice their honour at its shrine; whereas a man of the least delicacy would not hesitate a moment to sacrifice love to honour.—But amongst us this alternative is very rare:—Not so much as you imagine; I, for example, have been in this situation.—Oh! do tell me?—I was in love with a charming girl!—Was she fair or brown?—Her hair was bright chesnut—Had she a fine complexion?—a beautiful shape?—Yes, she was a perfect beauty; we were both at liberty; we loved each other. Our parents approved and fixed the day, which was to unite us for ever. I was then in the sea service. War was declared. I instantly flew to Versailles, asked for a command, obtained it, but on condition that I set out without delay, that is to say, the next day. This was imposing on me a cruel sacrifice.

sacrifice. I must defer for four or five months a marriage, on which depended the happiness of my life. I was obliged to go, to embark, and to leave my love a prey to despair.—Yet I did not hesitate; I accepted the command; and promised to depart at day-break—And did you see your mistress?—Yes: it was necessary to tell her the fatal news; she vainly employed tears, intreaties, convulsions, and faintings to retain me: I left her, set out, and embarked.—And what became of her after your departure?—She consoled herself; and at my return I found her married.—I did not expect such a conclusion.—Were you older, it would surprize you less.—But your behaviour does not astonish me in the least.—In truth it was very natural.—I am sure I should not hesitate a moment between love and duty.—Neither is love a passion made for you.—How?—None but a madman would give himself up to it, unless he could flatter himself with a sincere return.—Well then?—Well then, consider your rank; and what assurance can you have, that you would not owe the preference shewn you to secret motives of ambition.—That would be a sad idea; I must then likewise relinquish all hopes of possessing friends.—Oh! that is quite another case: a man will shew his attachment for you by real services and virtuous actions, and such proofs ought to obtain your confidence and esteem; whilst no woman but your wife can manifest her affection for you, but by rendering herself despicable, even in your eyes. Suppose that a man, entrusted with a secret, should reveal it to you, telling you that he can hide nothing from you; that he is only guilty of this treachery from his friendship

to you; would this pretended proof affect you? Would you be persuaded that he really loved you? Certainly not;—because a dishonourable person never deserves to be trusted:—Even the action, which he looks on as a mark of affection, will only serve to make him suspected.—There are nevertheless men, who think themselves really beloved by women, who are not estimable—assuredly. When a woman sacrifices her reputation, ease, and honour for a man, one ought to believe it is love alone that seduces her; but in your place, my Lord, how can you ever ascertain that?—But if a Prince should be beloved by a disinterested woman, who apparently despises riches and honours?—And who will affirm, that this woman may not be at the bottom of her heart as ambitious as she appears the reverse? But supposing her to persevere in such conduct, still a Prince would have reason to suspect the sincerity of her love; for there has been many instances of people, who could despise money and preferment, yet were very susceptible of that sort of respect which attends authority and favour. I will go further: he, who as a private man would never have inspired this passion, as a Prince has frequently been very successful.—But why for my rank is in effect nothing to my person.—Very true; but rank has a great sway on the imagination; and imagination alone is the mother and nurse of love. This weak and imperious passion requires equality; it can never exist with ambition; and a lover, from whom we expect, or receive a great fortune, should never flatter himself with inspiring a great passion.—All this is very true; I feel it; but yet history celebrates

celebrates many great Princes, who have loved passionately. — They had been much greater, could they have defended themselves from the seducing power of love; but you ought likewise to observe that it was very rare, that these princes' mistresses governed them, or obtained any secrets of state. — State secrets! Why a man must be mad who trusts a woman with them. — Most surely; for exclusive of their imprudence, women understand nothing of that sort. A Prince is convinced of the understanding and integrity of a man, before he places any confidence in him; and how is it possible to judge of a woman's, since she can be employed neither in council nor embassies? — Is it possible there should ever have been a Prince so thoughtless as to consult women on important affairs? — To such an excess of blindness love may lead them, if they have the frailty to allow themselves to be enslaved; judge then if it is not necessary for a Prince to know how to resist it at all times.

This conversation, my dear Baron, ought to satisfy your curiosity, and answers your questions better, than a long string of arguments. Finally, it makes you perfectly acquainted with the ideas and opinions, I would instill into my Prince relative to love and women.

L E T-

L E T T E R XXVI.

M. d'Améri to Madame de Valmont.

A T length I have obtained a private interview with Madame *d'Almaine*; I have made a free confession, and applaud myself for so doing: she told me without disguise, that she was delighted at *Charles's* proving himself more sensible to the charms of modesty and accomplishments, than to the allurements of coquetry. All my hopes are confirmed by the interested and even affectionate manner, with which she spoke of him; she was of opinion, that I ought to enjoin *Charles* to conquer his passion entirely; that is to say, to go away with me directly without seeing Madame *d'Ostalis*, and for us not to return to Paris for a year. But this seeming to me too severe, we agreed that I should remonstrate very strongly, and make him promise to avoid her as much as possible. The very day I had this conversation, I took *Charles* to a little ball; *Adelaide* was there; my grandson had never seen her dance, and seemed charmed with her graceful figure.— To day he heard her sing, and saw her draw; he told me to-night, that he was convinced she would one day possess all the talents, accomplishments, and virtues of Madame *d'Ostalis*. As to Madame *de Valcy*, she persists in her scheme, and she behaves so very imprudently in this respect, that every body is convinced *Charles* has sup-
planted

planted *M. de Creny*: for they do not imagine a youth of eighteen capable of resisting such advances. We supped last Sunday at *Madame d'Almaine's*, and there met (for the first time these three weeks) *Madame d'Ostalis*. *Charles* could not conceal his emotions, and found means to seat himself next her at supper. I was too far from them to be able to observe him; but after supper sorrow was so visible in his countenance, that I was quite alarmed. I enquired the cause. He pressed my hand without being able to speak, and I saw his eyes filled with tears. Equally disturbed and surprised, I sought an occasion to depart, and took him away immediately. When we were alone, he broke through all constraint, and gave free vent to his tears. I entreated him, but in vain, to let me know the motive for so violent a grief; I could draw from him only incoherent words. At last, becoming a little calmer; I am, says he, the most wretched of men; I have broke my resolutions and promises.—*Madame d'Ostalis* will despise me; and I am unworthy of your favours.—But what then has happened to you?—I have broke silence; I have declared myself, or at least I have made known those sentiments, which I promised to conceal.—What! you have then dared to declare your passion to *Madame d'Ostalis*?—Intoxicated with joy at again seeing and sitting by her, I forgot every thing, even the fear of disobliging her. I do not know what I said, but too well remember the look she cast on me—that look which manifested so cold a disdain, and such scornful pride—and which imposed on me such absolute silence!—This confession afflicted me very much; I knew
that

that Madame *d'Ostalis* would not fail informing Madame *d'Almane*, and I resolved to go and talk to her myself; which I did the next day. She seemed affected by the confidence I placed in her. After having thanked me, she said, you see I was in the right, when I advised your going away directly; violent measures are always the most efficacious: the *Chevalier de Valmont* would then have made an entire sacrifice of his passion. You did not insist on what you have a right to expect; and you have obtained nothing. You have increased his weakness by humouring it; you would have given strength to his resolution by appearing to rely on it. These reflections made a deep impression on me; but the time for departure is lost; *Charles* will not consent, but with despair. Besides, he is at present much less occupied by love, than by the desire of regaining Madame *d'Ostalis's* esteem. He feels that he cannot obtain that but by avoiding her in earnest, and convincing her he is radically cured of a sentiment which offends her. I therefore see no inconvenience from our staying here till May. Finally, my dear daughter, if I change my plan, you shall be informed directly; and I shall not leave Paris but to come to you.

L E T-

LETTER XXVII.

The Baronefs to Madame de Valmont.

IS it poffible, Madame, that you fhould ask me ferioufly, if *Adelaide* is prefent, when I receive my evening vifitors? Can you figure to yourfelf my little *Adelaide*, feated forrowfully on the edge of her chair, in the midft of a circle, liftening to a very unconnected and frivolous converfation, and making all the little customary compliments? — No, no, Madam, *Adelaide* is a charming child, but fhe is ftill but a child; and fhe will not fee the world, till fhe is of an age to fee with her own eyes, and judge for herfelf. I have a new anecdote, which will ferve to add to the collection you make of “the trials *Adelaide* has fufained.” This courfe of artificial experience will not end thefe two years; when *Adelaide* is above fourteen, events will naturally arife, and I fhall be no longer compelled “to create them.”

But let us return to the trial of the day before yefterday.—You muft know, that for thefe laft four months fhe has received two Louis-d’ors a month by way of pocket-money; out of which fhe is obliged to find herfelf in pins, powder, pomatum, fhoes, gloves, and writing paper. The firft month the whole fum was wafted in three days in fuperfluities; and fhe was forced to wear ragged fhoes and dirty gloves. She felt

felt the necessity of order and œconomy. She keeps her accounts exact, and has already learned to suit her expences to her income. *Adelaide* came into my closet yesterday noon, just as I was going to a cabinet-maker's to buy some furniture I was in want of; she intreated me to let her go with me. I have, says she, some money remaining of my monthly allowance, and I wish to buy a little table.—I consent, replied I, and the more readily, as I wish you to begin to know the price of those things you must one day purchase; which cannot be learnt but by going sometimes to the shops. We set out, and went into a very fine shop. She enquired for tables, and they shewed her a charming one, in which was inclosed an ink-stand and desk; but unfortunately it came to twenty-seven livres, and she had but twelve. This is unlucky, whispered I; if you had not spent eighteen livres last month in cut paper, straw boxes, Bergamot toothpick-cases, toys in short, all of which you have already broke or lost, you could have bought this pretty table. *Adelaide* sighed; I left her to reflect on this misfortune; and when I had made my purchases, called her, and we went away. When we were in the carriage, I perceived a large box of rose wood under her arm: What, says I, have you bought that?—Yes, mamma.—And for how much?—For my twelve livres.—But was it a table you wanted?—Yes; but I could not find a pretty one for my price.—And for that reason you bought a thing you did not want, nor have any use for—Would it not have been wiser to have reserved your twelve livres to assist in raising a sufficient

a sufficient sum to pay for such a table as you saw?—That is true; I was to blame.—Besides, we ought never to divest ourselves entirely of money to please our fancies. Things may happen, which will make us regret it.—But I shall receive my allowance in three days.—It is very possible you may wish for money within that time. . . . The day after this conversation, a footman came into *Adelaide's* chamber, and delivered a letter which was directed to her, saying, a woman, who appears very pale, and ill dressed, had just brought it. *Adelaide*, surprized, gave the letter to Miss *Bridget*, who opened it directly, and read aloud what follows:

“ Mademoiselle,

“ I implore your compassion; I have seven
 “ children which I have just left in a garret, al-
 “ most dying with hunger. Acquainted with
 “ your mamma’s charitable disposition, I came
 “ to beg her to relieve me; but hearing that she
 “ is not yet awake, I address myself to you. I
 “ am writing in your kitchen, where I see a fire
 “ for the first time these eight days. But, alas!
 “ my poor children are at this instant perishing
 “ perhaps with cold and hunger!—For Heaven
 “ sake have pity on them!

“ *Marianne*, the wife of *Durand*.”

Oh, great God! exclaimed *Adelaide*, bursting into tears, what shall I do?—How! Mademoiselle, returned Miss *Bridget*, can you hesitate about giving this unhappy woman money to buy bread? Send her a crown; that relief will suffice for to-day; and you cannot doubt your

mamma's extricating her utterly from so deplorable a state.—A crown, replied *Adelaide*, sobbing, a crown! Alas, I have it not!—Oh had I but my twelve livres! Detestable box! Oh, Miss *Bridget*! I conjure you, my dear Miss *Bridget*, to lend me twelve livres!—What is it you say, Miss? How! have you nothing remaining of your monthly allowance?—Ah! do lend me twelve livres!—I cannot; your mamma has expressly forbid my ever lending you money.—Alas, alas! and this poor woman!—Be easy, she shall be relieved; I for my part do not spend all my money in trifles: it is not requisite for me to see distress, to remember and pity it. Thus saying, she went hastily out of the room, leaving *Adelaide* absorbed in confusion and remorse. A little while after Mademoiselle *Victoire* went into her room. Oh, Miss, cried she, weep no more at this poor woman's misfortunes: she is now quite happy; the Louis-d'or Miss *Bridget* gave her has restored her to life. Oh, how you would be moved could you be witness to her joy!—She knelt to Miss *Bridget*!—She is so grateful!—Oh, Miss, what a good action you have just done!—Me!—what are you talking of?—Why, that Louis you charged Miss *Bridget* to give her.—What did Miss *Bridget* say?—That it was from you.—Oh, Heaven! I ought not to suffer it—follow me, Mademoiselle *Victoire*. *Adelaide* rose, as she finished this speech, took her rose-wood box, under her arm, and desired Mademoiselle *Victoire* to conduct her to the poor woman. They went into the kitchen, where they found Miss *Bridget*, surrounded by the servants, by the side
of

of the poor woman. This last hearing *Adelaide* named, came and prostrated herself at her feet, all in tears. *Adelaide* weeping bitterly, raised her, saying, "I have not been so happy as to be able to give you the relief you have received; you owe it entirely to Miss *Bridget*:—but take this box, sell it to-morrow, that I may at least flatter myself with being useful to you in some respect." The woman refusing to take the box, Oh rid me of it, added *Adelaide*; that alone was the cause of my not assisting you; let me never see it more. After this action *Adelaide* returned to her own apartment, far less discontented with herself. A moment after Miss *Bridget* went to her, and told her that the woman was gone in a hackney coach with *Brunel*, who had undertaken to see her home. *Adelaide* asked why *Brunel* followed her. Because, answered Miss *Bridget*, I was desirous of knowing the truth of her assertions. I could not refuse this assistance to a person apparently so unfortunate; but in general I do not give alms, without first obtaining all the information which prudence and even well-directed humanity exacts. In order to be able to alleviate as much as possible the distress of the truly indigent, one must strive not to be the dupe of idleness and knavery. . . . When I awoke, my daughter and Miss *Bridget* attended me; and the former related this story with tears in her eyes. I did not allow myself to make a single reflection; my own heart dictating all that a similar adventure could inspire: a useless remonstrance is as disgusting as it is tiresome, and frequently shocks the source of the most repentant tears.

I contented myself with pitying *Adelaide*: My poor little dear, what must you have suffered, said I! what a cruel morning!—Alas, replied she, I shall never again feel this grievous pain; I am cured for life of those whims which can alone produce them, and deprive me of the happiness Miss *Bridget* this morning enjoyed.—Hear me, *Adelaide*, said I; I will not have you carry any thing to extremes. Take Reason for your guide in forming any resolution, and she will not exact the absolute sacrifice of your fancies; she will limit herself to requiring you not to indulge them all. That graceful virtue, Moderation, is good and even necessary in every thing. We abuse our privileges, when we enjoy them in their full extent. If you walk as much as you can, you will be overcome with fatigue; so if you employ in superfluities all the overplus fortune has allotted you, you will want moderation, and lose that satisfaction and happiness you cannot taste without it. Therefore, for the sake of humanity, and to enhance your pleasures*, you ought not to spend all in baubles, but reserve half for charitable uses.—But how am I to know the exact sum which will remain?—There is nothing more easy. You receive two Louis the first day of the month; buy nothing but what is absolutely necessary; and unless such an occasion as that of

* *Montaigne* says, speaking of virtue: “She is the mother and nurse of the pleasures of life; by making them just, she makes them certain and pure; by moderating, she keeps them in breath and appetite; by diminishing those she refuses us, she makes those she leaves us the more desirable.

this morning should offer, keep the rest of your money till the last day of the month; then that sum will be your overplus, divide it into two equal parts; the one for the poor, and the other for fancies.—But, mamma, you give all your overplus to the poor; I cannot recollect any one whim of yours.—In some years you will have fewer; at my age you will cease to have any. You have thrown aside the toys of infancy; you now amuse yourself with those adapted to youth. There will come a time, when you will care no more for china, monkeys, or little tables, than you now care for dolls. We grow tired of fine houses, beautiful gardens, jewels, magnificence, a throne; every thing in short disgusts us but the pleasure of doing good.—Yes, Kings, Queens, and Emperors have abdicated, in all ages; and *M. de Lagaraye*, for example, finds his felicity increase daily, in the manner of life which he has adopted. Doubtless this is the case; for it is so delightful to dispense happiness, that the man who would resolve to be charitable for six months, would continue so to the end of his life.—Although I am but a child I feel that—Oh, mamma, from this hour I will give all my overplus to the poor.—No, you are not yet worthy; limit yourself to what I have said.—On the contrary, I desire you for some years to amuse yourself in making a collection of all the pretty baubles which tempt you, that you may the sooner know how easily they disgust us.—Most assuredly, I, for instance, shall never again buy a rose-wood box; I have taken such an aversion to them—and the little tables of twenty-seven

livres value!—Twenty-seven livres!—Oh that I had but such an overplus! I would send it to the poor woman!

When *Adelaide* retired that same night, she saw the charming little table she had cheapened at the cabinet-maker's by her bed-side. After having expressed her joy: This, said she, ought to satisfy all my fancies for three months: therefore during that time I shall not divide my overplus "into two equal parts:" it will be all for the poor. You will judge, Madam, if such a resolution, the result of the first emotion, and which I am sure will be adhered to faithfully, is not a sufficient reward for all my care.

I do not mention the Chevalier *de Valmont*; for he told me yesterday he should write to you this morning. So I shall content myself with telling you, that he spends his days with us, that he does not appear tired, that I love him now, Madam, not for your sake, but very sincerely for his own.

LETTER XXVIII.

Madame de Germeuil to Madame de Valcy.

OH! my dear friend, what a dismal winter have I just passed! I own to you that the probability of my exile lasting another year dis-
tracts

tracts me.—To live sixty leagues from Paris, is it life?—Shut up in an old castle, with a mother-in-law who detests me, and who is as tiresome, as she is godly, deaf, cross, and quarrelsome; add to all this “the torment of neighbours;” such shocking men!—Women so dressed!—Such behaviour and fashions!—The least insupportable amongst them calls her husband *my friend* before all company. Judge then of the rest. Moreover, the fashionable amusements here are walking, fishing, reading, and playing at Loto*. You see how well this suits me, and how I must be diverted. I am so altered, so horribly thin—If they will force me to spend another winter here, I declare to you there are no extremities, into which I shall not be ready to run.—My debts in two years, it is true, amounted to forty thousand livres, but did I not bring M. de Germeuil fifty thousand livres a year; and has he not himself gamed away upwards of five hundred thousand? Does he think, he alone has the right to ruin himself? he has just treated me in a manner, which raises my resentment to the height. I thought proper to write, and inform him it was my desire to have my daughter taken out of the convent, and sent to me. He answered me bluntly, that I ought to give up that fancy; that *his daughter* would be much better educated in a convent, than with me: in a word, he flatly refused me. You know I am not naturally fond of children. Besides, a little girl of six years old could not be any great resource. Therefore this

* Loto, a sort of lottery, a game much played at in France; the cards are of a particular kind, having numbers on them.

refusal affects me slightly in regard to the object; but you will allow, that the reason is very offensive.—It is plain from that, that I shall not only never have the disposal of my daughter, but I shall not be even permitted to preside over her education. I would lay any wager, at fifteen she will neither know how to come into a room, nor to dress herself gracefully, nor even to put a flower in her hair; for how is it possible for a man to bring up a young woman, and take the place of a mother?

Would you believe, my love, that it is above three months since I have heard of a “certain person.” He is nevertheless in a great measure the cause of my slavery. Oh! if I could but have foreseen!—You forbid recurring to the past—Of what then must I think? The present is insupportable; I dare not look forward; indeed I never could conceive the pleasures of futurity. It contains two ills, the bare idea of which chills me; old age and death—Particularly old age; what an horrid thing!—Only figure to yourself, what it is to be forty, and a grandmother! You see, my dear friend, what pleasing thoughts solitude inspires. I do assure you if it lasts, I shall die of a consumption. Adieu, my dear life: for Heaven sake inform me, if levites are still fashionable, and if they wear sacks. If so, I shall beg you to send me two.

LETTER XXIX.

Madame de Valcy to Madame de Germeuil.

O H! my dear friend, how I pity you! I am sincerely affected by your sorrows!—But the idea that you may pass another winter sixty leagues from me, is insupportable. I stand in need of you every moment; and more than ever during these last three months, when I have experienced a succession of difficulties, which I feel myself no longer able to resist. Madame d'Almaine is here: that is saying every thing. You will readily believe she dictates at least five or six sermons a day to my mother, which I am obliged to listen to; and all to engage me to adopt the manners and behaviour of Madame d'Ostalis. If they look on her as so perfect a pattern, why did not they educate me as they did her?—We are both 'just as they made us.' She is very prudent, very reasonable; I am very giddy, very trifling; she knows how to employ herself, to paint, and play on the harp; I know how to dance. We have profited alike, each of us, of the examples, attentions, and education we have received. Notwithstanding my detestation of lectures, I could submit to hear them from those who have a right to preach.—But I would have people just and consistent; I shall never be converted by any preacher, who does not possess these two qualifications. For example, my mother came into my apartment the other

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morning,

morning, and found on the table two volumes of plays, 'a little free,' which brought on a remonstrance of half an hour long, a most eloquent panegyric on decency, modesty, taste, and propriety, &c. &c. In short, this dissertation perhaps might not have been finished by this time, had I not suddenly interrupted it by saying, very plainly, "these plays are truly very free, but I did not think there was any more harm, in reading than in seeing them acted." Now in order for you to feel all the smartness of this reply, you must know, that these very plays were acted some years since at M. *de Blejac's*, and my mother attended every representation. I owe this information to Madame *de Gerville*, and cannot doubt its truth; for my mother took me in an instant: she blushed extremely, put herself in a passion, and quitted me in a fury: in fine, she will revenge herself on my sister; she will make her 'a prodigy;' in the mean time, she is the most insipid little creature you ever beheld. A-propos of prodigies and 'perfection:' we have, just arrived here, a young man, who fascinates every body; he is called the Chevalier *de Valmont*: Madame *d'Almaine* patronises him extremely; and was he richer, I should think she intended him for her daughter: finally, he is really very pleasing; but he has the most dismal grandfather, and the most tiresome imaginable: besides, he is a pedant, a man of learning, a devotee, a philosopher; in short, a man as unfit for the world, as he is vexatious to his grandson, whom he watches, harasses, and follows like a shadow. But to return to the Chevalier: they pretend that he is in love with
me;

me; I should be sorry if he was; for he interests me, and I would not inspire him with a sentiment of which my heart is no longer susceptible.—I will not lose again that sweet peace, I have at last found means to recover, after so much agitation. If we are really doomed once in our lives to be violently in love, my tribute is not yet paid; for you know how I deceived myself. Oh! was I to love truly, it would be without bounds; I feel it.—But I will not love at all: I will fly from the slightest emotion of preference: I will seek you, confide to you my weakness, and you will make me conquer it.—If there are any antidotes to love, friendship alone can administer them. Farewel, my dear creature. Oh! why are you not here? How dear may your absence perhaps cost me!

L E T T E R. XXX.

Madame d'Almaine to Madame de Valmont.

YES, Madame, the adventure of the poor woman has been followed up: we have learnt her history, and we know that she has told nothing but the truth; she has seven children; that she is in the utmost distress; that she was formerly a milliner; that the immense credit she gave many young ladies occasioned her to become a bankrupt; that she divested herself of every thing for the sake of her creditors, &c.

This recital of Miss *Bridget's*, on her return from the poor woman's, has sensibly affected *Adelaide*; but, said she, all those young people who bought on credit, paid at last? Not at all, replied Miss *Bridget*; the major part are unable.—But how so?—A tradesman who sells on credit charges higher, that he may receive interest for his money; which is but just. A woman who buys in that manner has no right to cheapen, and commonly receives the goods without asking the price; which causes her, at the end of a year or two, having frequently no more than six or seven thousand livres a year allowed her, to have bills amounting to fifteen or twenty thousand; consequently she cannot pay them.—The tradesman has her summoned.—Her husband is obliged to pay her bills, but he has them taxed; and obtains a long delay, and in all this time the unfortunate dealer, pressed by his own creditors, unable to gather in his debts, is quickly ruined.—It is nevertheless shocking for a woman to be the author of such a calamity! For instance, you know *Madame de Germeuil*?—Yes.—She is in the country, and yet her husband is here, which appears very odd to me. The reason is, they have quarrelled, and on account of the enormous debts she has contracted; for she paid nobody.—But how is it possible to carry extravagance to such an excess?—When ladies want honesty and consideration, and foolishly accustom themselves to yield to all their fancies, they have the ridiculous ambition of outshining all other women by the elegance and expensiveness of their dress: this brings on great milliners bills; they are cheated and robbed,

robbed, they ruin and dishonour themselves, and barter the confidence of their husbands, the sweets of domestic felicity, and the approbation of the world, for some pieces of gold stuff, some feathers, flowers, gauzes, and ribbons.—Oh! gracious Heaven, what a frightful picture! How is it possible, that so frivolous a temptation should induce any one to engage in such misfortunes? For my part, the fear of contributing to a bankruptcy will preserve me for ever.

Thus the dangers attending bills, the necessity of learning to resist our fancies, and of being an economist, if one would be benevolent, are maxims indelibly engraven on the heart and understanding of *Adelaide*.

M. d'Aimeri has informed you, Madam, that the proposed alliance of *Theodore* and the little *Constantia* is known to all Madame de Limours's acquaintance. Notwithstanding all her resolutions to the contrary, she talks openly of it. Her manner of caressing *Theodore*, and her behaviour to him, would alone suffice to discover this secret, which she has promised me so faithfully to keep. I am most pained by her indiscretion in revealing it to her daughter, a child of eleven years.—Madame de Limours, ashamed of her weakness, tries in vain to deny it; but I saw it too easily, by the extraordinary affection *Constantia* already betrays for *Theodore*: she blushes the moment he appears; never talks to him but in a low, and almost a trembling voice; if he leaves her, or is absent, she is melancholy, thoughtful, and absent. Thus it is, that her young heart feels the pains of a dangerous passion, the very name of which she ought to be ignorant!

ignorant! Had not an imprudent confidence set her up, and inflamed her imagination, she would now enjoy that amiable and soft tranquillity suitable to her age, and she would see *Theodore* without observing him more than any other person. Alas! who can tell to what a depth of misery this imprudence of her mother may lead her!—Adieu, Madam! I shall have the pleasure of seeing you again in a month; but, unfortunately, it will be for a very short time; for M. d'*Almaine* will positively have us at Toulon by the end of April.

LETTER XXXI.

M. de Lagaraye to Porphyry.

HOW! *Porphyry*, after your great success, are you astonished to have found enemies, and to have lost the friend whom you most confided in? This astonishment, however, does you honour—Go on, and never abandon those noble sentiments which occasion it. Oh! may increase of years, and the woeful experience of riper age, never rob you of that extreme surprise, which envy, breach of faith, injustice, and malice, cause in you! Be, if it must be so, the victim of hatred. What does it signify, provided, while you suffer by it, you yourself feel not the torments of that detestable passion! If ever you should come to have a bad opinion of mankind,

mankind, throw away your pen, and lay aside your studies : to be able to instruct and inform mankind, you must love them too. Works, produced under the influence of that sublime sentiment, will have a just claim to immortality. Why should you hate the rivals that envy you, and the enemies that persecute you?—Because they are worthless?—Proud boy! Are you very sure that you are naturally more worthy than they? If they have been misled by education, if they have never been restrained by the persuasive voice of a faithful friend, tell me which they deserve most, your hatred or your compassion?—And *you!* do you imagine that you owe to nature only the good qualities you possess?—Ungrateful youth! have you already forgot the happy days of your infancy?—Ah, my son! call to mind the school of Lagaraye, and you will be modest and more indulgent.—Ten anonymous pamphleteers have taken your work to pieces, and endeavoured to ridicule your person. A set of *periodical writers* have amused and diverted themselves in burlesquing you, though very awkwardly; like professed story-tellers, whose insipid, threadbare, and often-repeated stories provoke nobody's laughter but their own.—What! do you then pretend to universal empire?—In vain do you hope to please both wise men and fools; make your option between them; for you will never persuade them to entertain the same opinion of your productions.—If you despise not all these petty attacks upon you, you will multiply them; your notice will give them importance, and you will thereby discover a weakness unworthy of your character.

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Imitate *M*—, who published a useful work, and consequently a valuable one; Mr. *de V*— criticised it unjustly and without foundation, but at the same time with much wit and humour: a friend of the author going one morning to see him, overheard him laughing in his closet alone; surprised at the novelty, he stopped at the door, and saw *M*— reading a pamphlet, and from time to time ready to burst with laughter, and crying ‘What a comical rogue! how lively!’ This pamphlet, which so diverted him, proved to be Mr. *de V*—’s satire.—He that can laugh heartily at a criticism upon his own works, must certainly be a man of no common turn of mind. You, it is true, are not likely to be put to this test; for there are few critics now a-days who can write like *V*—. Never answer any of them, except they attack the moral principles of your works: then, indeed, and then alone, you should defend yourself; but still it should be done with a clearness and dignity, void of irony and ill-humour.—Take care, however, my dear *Porphyry*, to distinguish partial satires from just criticisms, which never adopt the insulting stile of burlesque and banter. Dictated by reason, taste, and truth, they will afford you new lights, and teach you how to put a perfect and finishing hand to your works; and you should read them, not only without preevishness, but with gratitude. As a man is very apt to be partial in his own cause, send me all the criticisms they have made on your work; I will read them carefully, and tell you sincerely what I think of them. Were a friend of no other use, no author should be without one.—Happy the man, whose pride pre-

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vents him not from consulting his friends, and following the salutary advice which friendship alone has courage to give !

LETTER XXXII.

The Baroneſs to Madame de Valmont.

I Leave this place to-morrow, Madam, and ſhall ſtop at D—— till the ſeventh ; but ſhall certainly have the pleaſure of embracing you in leſs than ten days. Madame de Limours is leſs affected at our parting than you can imagine, becauſe ſhe herſelf is leaving this place for four months ; ſhe follows M. de Limours, who is to command this year at ——, and being about to make a journey of fourſcore leagues from Paris, and for the firſt time, ſhe is ſo taken up with the preparations for her own departure, that ſhe has no time to think of mine. The Chevalier de Valmont came this afternoon to take his leave of me. Having preſſed my hand and kiſſed it, he quitted my apartment without being able to utter a word. He has an excellent heart ; it will be a great pity ſhould he do otherwiſe than well ! You can have no conception how it would grieve me.—Adieu, Madam ! I hope you will be ſo good as to give me a dinner the 14th or 15th.

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LETTER XXXIII.

The same to the Viscountess.

Antibes, 1st May.

WE arrived at Antibes yesterday, my dear friend, and perhaps shall not leave it to-morrow; for the winds are quite contrary. *Adelaide* began yesterday to familiarise herself with precipices. We were seven hours and an half in performing the twelve leagues between Frejus and Antibes; for the roads are equally bad and dangerous; the mountain of * Estrel, among others, is really frightful on account of its precipices. I observed *Adelaide*, astonished and pale, often fix her eyes upon me, as if to ask me if there were any danger; she would have been glad had I discovered her fears, but durst not confess them to me: I affected not to take notice of her emotions, and even contrived, by some indirect conversation, without her discovering my intentions, to create a desire in her to conceal her feelings; for the care of hiding our fears occupies the mind, and diminishes the excess of them: so that by degrees *Adelaide* recovered herself, and at length became tolerably composed. Upon the whole she is enchanted with travelling. All she sees astonishes and charms her; and nothing is comparable to the pleasure she takes in writing her

* This mountain is four leagues long, and affords many admirable prospects.

journal;

journal; but, if she does not acquire a little more precision, this same journal will amount to thirty or forty volumes. Antibes already takes up eight pages of it; it is true, four of them contain a catalogue of flowers and plants in this neighbourhood; for we took a long walk this morning, and *Adelaide* was astonished to see the fields full of flowers, rosemary, thyme, marjoram, and bushes of althea, myrtle, yellow jessamine, and honeysuckle, &c.

You ask how we travel:—We, that is to say, *M. d'Almaine*, Miss *Bridget*, *Dainville*, my children, and myself, are all in my great coach, which you know; and we have a second carriage, in which are my women and *Brunel*; we always stop four hours a day, to dine and give our children various lessons. *Adelaide* writes and draws: in the mean time I tune her harp, after which she plays an hour. In the carriage, we contrive that our conversation may not be useless to them; the great art of instructing young folks, without their suspecting it, is by talking familiarly to them; this important method, so neglected in common educations, is perhaps the most efficacious and most useful of all. How happens it, that we see so many people, who do not want parts, who yet know neither how to talk themselves, nor how to listen to others? It is because they are brought too early into the world. A young person, fourteen or fifteen years of age, hears nothing talked of, in the circle he frequents, but frivolous things, which leave no impressions at all upon his mind; or such only as raise false and dangerous ideas. If the conversation falls upon interesting and
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solid subjects, they are treated in a manner above the comprehension of a person of fourteen years old, who would be horridly tired by them, and from thence acquire a lasting habit of inattention; and every serious conversation would appear to him cold and insipid, and he would carefully avoid it; or, rather, his indolence and inattention would prevent his bearing a part in, or even comprehending it. Make a young person read books above his comprehension, and he will never love reading; and if he often listen to the discourses even of persons of understanding, who converse for their own pleasure, without a view to his improvement, he will never love conversation; and yet this is the method followed by the most intelligent mothers and the most able directors of youth!

To return to our employments in the carriage: we frequently tell stories, sometimes repeat verses, make reflections on poetry, and criticise the verses we have recited: we talk alternately English, Italian, French; then each of us has a book, and, at different intervals, we all read three or four hours a day, and mutually give an account of what each has read, which furnishes new matter for conversation.

Now, my dear friend, I have answered all your questions, let us talk of *Madame de Valcy*, and let us discuss the matter minutely.—All that you tell me relative to her afflicts me, and I confess makes me very angry.—She is in despair, you say, on quitting Paris for four months, *because she leaves her friends and acquaintance*; she is twenty years old, is going with her husband, and to follow her father and mother; yet weeps
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and laments leaving *her friends and the society she has formed!* Alas! ought she to have any other than yours?—The whole mischief comes from *Madame de Germeuil*, from that *first* friend, against whom I declared myself so roundly from the very commencement of the connection. *Madame de Valcy* adopted *the friends and the society* of her intimate friends, and immediately ten or twelve strangers introduced themselves into your house, and robbed you of the predilection, the confidence, and the heart of your daughter!—I observed *Madame de Valcy* continually giving breakfasts to *her friends* without you, and going out alone to sup with them. Imagine to yourself, what passes at those dangerous assemblies! Be assured that they there contrive every method of estranging *Madame de Valcy* from her most important duties, those of loving her husband, and revering her mother;—*there* she is pleased, because she is *there* praised, approved, and admired; *there* they turn into ridicule every society but their own; and certainly they do not spare yours, composed in general of persons of knowledge, and of a mature age. This kind of liberty passes under the name of confidence and unreserved friendship; but from ridiculing their friends and acquaintance, people too easily pass on to turn into ridicule the most respectable, and sometimes even the most sacred things.

I think it better to apply to the understanding than to the heart of *Madame de Valcy*;—I advise you to observe her carefully, and, the first occasion of discontent she gives you, speak to her with the greatest firmness; and when you leave —, carry her with you for six months to your estate in Anjou, where, you know, M.

de

de Limours has long wished to pass an autumn: Besides, such a party may serve you to regain the affections of your husband; and certainly it will be serviceable to *Madame de Valcy*.—You will at first find her sorrowful and dejected; she will think herself unhappy; she will treat with disdain her country neighbours, who strive to please her; will look upon them as a species of creatures unworthy to judge of her merits, and set a just value on them; she will think it a pitiable case to be obliged to live with ill-dressed women, and men who have not the *ton* and manners of the court; but by degrees these ideas will grow weaker; she will become more tractable, more just, more obliging; at length she may find out that good-sense and good-nature are of all countries; that *forms*, which always vary in various places, are also always frivolous, and of no account in the eye of reason. Nothing is more irksome, for a continuance, than disdain to her who uses it; and in the end she will be tired of it. Pride, which causes, will also correct it; for one cannot be always out of humour, without being disagreeable, and that reflection may cure it. In short, *Madame de Valcy* in that retreat, separated from *her friends*, and given up entirely to you, will have time to make some useful reflections: you will bring her back to Paris cured, in part at least, of her errors; she will be certainly less capricious, and less perverse; she will make fewer enemies; she will be more prudent and reserved; and, if she has any sense, she will see how much her happiness depends upon preserving your friendship, and regaining the affections of her husband.—This, my dear friend, is the method I should pursue,

pursue, were I in your place: as soon as you are come to a resolution in this affair, pray acquaint me with it. Adieu! I will write to you from Nice.—Direct your letters to me at Genoa.

LETTER XXXIV.

The same to the same.

Nice.

WE travel slowly; for since my last letter we have advanced but * four leagues. We have all been horribly sick at sea, except M. d'Almaine and Dainville. *Adelaide* and *Theodore* suffered cruelly; but they, as well as myself, were sick without complaining. Matrasses were provided in the felucca for the sick to lie on. In about half an hour, M. d'Almaine observed to his son, that such delicacy was ridiculous in a man, and that he might be sick as well sitting as lying. *Theodore* immediately got up; and I did the same, saying, that courage was as necessary in a woman as a man, though perhaps less useful: but still it was a virtue, and we ought to blush to be one moment without it. At these words the dejected *Adelaide* crept towards me, and sat down by my side.—This piqued *Theodore*, who, resolving to surpass women in courage, began chatting in the most free and easy

* From Antibes to Nice.

manner;

manner; and, though frequently interrupted by sickness, he resumed the conversation as though he had been in perfect health. M. *d'Almaine* triumphed; his eyes sparkled with joy, and seemed to say to me, *this is beyond the effort of one of your sex*. I leaned towards *Adelaide*; and whispering in her ear, said to her, have you a mind to shew your father, that you have as much resolution as *Theodore*? Let us sing a duett. She pressed my hand, and in an instant we began a duett, which we sang, a little out of tune indeed, but with all our force, and with a cheerful mein. M. *d'Almaine* came and embraced his daughter: Preserve, my children, says he, this laudable desire of equalling each other in virtue; such an emulation cannot produce a rivalry between you; for endeavouring mutually after perfection, you will render yourselves more worthy of our affection, and of that love you have for each other. As M. *d'Almaine* finished these words, *Theodore* came, and falling on his knees before me, took one of his sister's hands and one of mine, and joining them together, he kissed them with that ingenuous and tender air, which you know him possessed of, and which renders all his actions so obliging and so agreeable.—We have resolved to go to Genoa by *La Corniche*, that is to say, by land, in a sort of litters carried by men. This little journey will take us up four or five days. M. *d'Almaine* says, it is very interesting and little known, and, in short, will quite harden the children against precipices and bad accommodations. We are to set out to-morrow morning at six o'clock.—Nice is a very pretty town, and
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its air so wholesome, that invalids come hither from far to breathe it, without using any other medicines. The mountains, that surround Nice, produce many plants and simples. We botanized yesterday and to-day. *Adelaide* has drawn and coloured many plants, and among others *the wild asparagus*; a shrub whose leaves are prickly, and of an emerald-green, its shape and delicacy are charming. She intends the little drawing for you, and I shall send it you from Genoa.

LETTER XXXV.

The Baron to M. d'Aimeri.

Nice.

YES, Sir, the confidence you repose in me, does me honour, at the same time that it obliges me. Your frankness ought to excite mine, and I shall answer you without reserve.—The match, which Madame *d'Olcy* proposes to you for the Chevalier *de Valmont*, is too advantageous, in point of fortune, to leave you in the least doubt of my sentiments on the subject: so that I must confess, you are not out in your conjectures: for it is very true, if the Chevalier *de Valmont* should answer the pains you take with him, and the hopes he gives, Madame *d'Almaine* and I should prefer him to any other. But I must at the same time inform you, that we would have this pro-

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ject,

ject, which can be but very uncertain as yet, absolutely unknown to my daughter : so that you must promise me not to communicate the confession I now make to any one, no not to *Madame de Valmont* herself. I know your prudence and discretion, and I have not the least doubt of your keeping this secret, which I look upon as a very important one. You know this union, however desirable it may be to us, depends entirely on the conduct of the *Chevalier de Valmont*. *Adelaide* is no more than twelve years and an half old; and *Madame d'Almaine* has determined not to marry her, till she is eighteen. Between this time and that we shall be able to judge with certainty of the character and principles of the *Chevalier de Valmont*; and, if during that time he does nothing to forfeit the good opinion we now have of him, I am very certain that *Madame d'Almaine* will give him her daughter with the greatest pleasure: *Madame d'Almaine*, I say; for on her alone shall the destiny of *Adelaide* depend. This right she has a claim to from me, both from justice and affection. Her behaviour to me, and the pains she has taken with her children, deserve this proof of my acknowledgment and esteem. Besides, can I better consult my daughter's happiness, than by leaving the disposal of her to so affectionate and intelligent a mother! — Consider, Sir, whether such a conditional engagement ought to make you decline the proposal of *Madame d'Olcy*. — *Mademoiselle de V* —, it is true, is not a person of quality; but she is a greater fortune than *Adelaide* will ever be. Do not refuse her, therefore, till you have well considered

sidered the matter; and pray take your time to answer this letter. I feel, as well as you, all the uneasiness the two approaching years must cause in you, on account of the Chevalier *de Valmont*; they will decide, perhaps absolutely, what he will be for the residue of his life. You must not judge by the last winter, what he will be the next. He then was but eighteen years old; and he thought it nothing extraordinary to be still in a state of dependance. He was but just entering the world; and his inexperience and timidity made him every instant feel the want of a mentor and a guide; he was in love too with a woman as virtuous as she was charming; which made him insensible to all the arts which coquetry employed to seduce him. But next winter he will be a year older; he will know more of the world; he will see all the young men of his own age become their own masters; he will be cured of his passion for Madame *d'Ostalis*; for love without hope cannot long subsist: to how many dangers will he then be exposed?—If you abandon him, he will yield to them; if you follow him without his consent, you will not preserve him; it is *he* himself that must retain *you*, must wish for you, and not be able to do without you: but this is not to be expected, except in a case where two persons have an unbounded confidence in each other, which is become habitual from their having been ever inseparable. But you have not had the care of the Chevalier *de Valmont* from his infancy. And since he came to years of discretion, you have been separated for many months. You have not accustomed him to

think, that, except on extraordinary occasions, you were born to be ever together. It will be no wonder, therefore, how good soever his natural dispositions may be, if he should long for independance. It is what you must expect; he will certainly slip thro' your hands: but, if his heart be good, he will return and seek you; you will easily regain his confidence, and at least you will preserve him from those grosser errors, which repentance can neither repair nor expiate. We must overlook some failings, provided he keep up a regard to decency and morality, a sensibility of mind, and good principles.—You ask me, how you shall secure him from the love of *play*. He has sense, knowledge, and education; idleness, therefore, and want of employment, will not drive him to commit follies; and this is saying a good deal: but still opportunity and example are always to be dreaded;—I dare not advise you to make use of the means I should employ with *my* son, to snatch him from this danger; because it may be attended with the greatest inconveniencies, if your pupil has not a command over himself, and if you are not sure, that he is incapable of breaking a reasonable resolution, when he has once seriously made it. For my part, when *Theodore* goes into the world, I shall require his word of honour never to play at games of hazard, and I am certain he never will. I should rely much less upon his discretion, if I required less of him; I mean, if I only requested a promise of him never to play *deep*. An absolute sacrifice is easier to make than a partial one, which neither takes us out of the way of temptation, nor
from

from the danger which opportunity may lay in our way: for it is easier to renounce things which give us pleasure, than to enjoy them moderately. But if you are not perfectly sure, that the *Chevalier de Valmont* has resolution enough to keep such a promise, do not exact it of him; leave him rather to learn wisdom from experience, and correct himself at his own expence, than expose him to forfeit his word.—When I have your answer to this letter, I will communicate to you another method, which you may employ without inconvenience; and which may serve as an excellent preservative against all the dangers that threaten the *Chevalier de Valmont*.—Adieu, dear Sir; permit me again to desire you would not answer me, till you have very maturely reflected on the proposal of *Madame d'Olcy*.

LETTER XXXVI.

The Viscountess to the Baroness.

WHILE you ramble up and down in search of great adventures, traverse the seas, enlarge your ideas, and acquire knowledge; whilst you lie on hard beds, eat tough chops, and onion soups; I dully vegetate in the midst of fifty persons who think of nothing, talk of nothing but common-place topics, knotting, playing at

loto, and sitting three hours at table.—You know how desirous I was to follow M. de *Limours*; I had formed a delicious idea of this excursion:—first of all, I was to act the governor's lady, and I imagined I should do it with a good grace; and the part did not displease me; then I flattered myself that four months spent fourscore leagues from Paris, and from Madame de *Gerville*, might produce a great change in my situation, and in the sentiments of M. de *Limours*. Besides, carrying Madame de *Valcy* with me, I still hoped to regain that place in her heart, which I could not renounce without extreme regret: but these hopes, so agreeable, are absolutely vanished. I was very happy the first fortnight I passed here; I had the greatest desire to please and be popular; all the officers of the garrison, all the gentlemen of the neighbourhood, and all the ladies of the place, vied with each other who should most praise my *kindness*, my *politeness*, and my *evenness of temper*; and even M. de *Limours* himself deigned frequently to commend me for the manner in which I did the honours of his house. I was in this situation, when one unlucky morning comes Madame de *Gerville* from Paris, under pretence of visiting an aunt of hers, who has been settled here these twenty years, and to whom she has not perhaps written four letters during the whole time. Her sudden appearance disconcerted me the more, as I understood at the same time, she intended not to return to Paris for two months.—She comes regularly to dine with me every day; gives balls, and fêtes, and is the delight of the town.—M. de *Limours* makes

makes no secret of his attachment to her; and Madame *de Valcy* herself professes the most tender friendship for her. All this increase of intimacy arises from her having persuaded him, that he owes his government to her solicitations; and therefore it is but just he should pay, in esteem and tenderness, what he has obtained by her rare talents at intrigue.—You may well imagine, that all this has hurt my *evenness of temper*, my *kindness*, and even my *politeness*;—at first I was out of humour; afterwards I had the ambition of forming a party against her, and began to succeed; for a reasonable number of persons preferred my house and society to that of Madame *de Gerville*: but all on a sudden I became tired of my party, and did what I could to get rid of them. At present I am quite abandoned; I see no company except at meals, and I pass the rest of the day with my little *Constantia*, my only resource, and my sole consolation.—After having undergone much vexation, chagrin, and ill-humour, I find myself, at last, in a situation of mind tolerably easy. I have taken my resolution like a philosopher.—A perfect indifference has restored my repose, and even a part of my gaiety;—I am charmed with myself; my resignation, and my sweetness of temper;—I am much to be pitied, and yet I am calm and reasonable!—Trouble is good, at least it is so for me. It discomposes me at first, but afterwards it cures me: for I can neither hate nor despond for a long time together.—Ah! certainly, were I capable of hating any one, I should hate, not Madame *de Gerville*, I should not do her that honour,—but M.

de Limours.—Let us talk no more of it; were I to dwell on that idea, vexation might again take hold of me.—I am mortally tired of this place, I confess, and long to return to Paris, and most certainly I shall not very soon take a fancy to *ramble* again. Adieu, my dear friend; write to me; tell me minutely every thing that is interesting to you; speak of your amiable children, the places you pass through, the people you see: think of me, and continue to love me. Alas! your friendship is become so necessary to me!—Believe me, I am really more unhappy than I appear, or than you can imagine me to be. My heart, at bottom, is much smitten and much afflicted. Adieu; I enclose a letter from my brother to the Baron, and, according to the direction in your journal, I address this packet to Nice: acquaint me exactly with your route.

LETTER XXXVII.

Count de Roseville to the Baron.

YES, my dear Baron, my young Prince has still the same prepossession in favour of Count *Stralzi*, which I mentioned to you: and since the departure of the Chevalier *de Valmont*, that attachment seems to be augmented. The Count was ill; the Prince testified great uneasiness at it, and sent ten times a day to enquire after his health; one evening, as he talked to me

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of him in a very affectionate manner: I did not think, says I, you loved him to that excess.—He is amiable; I believe him to be strongly attached to me, and it is very natural that I should have a friendship for him.—And what proof has he given you of his attachment?—He visits me often, and never flatters me.—Are you very sure of that?—Oh! very sure.—He has sense, and he knows you do not want it; he knows likewise that you were well informed and instructed. He will not therefore flatter you openly: but he has a certain manner of listening to you, and such a smile of approbation, that I should distrust were I in your place. I should distrust likewise those general encomiums he bestows on all those qualities, upon which you value yourself.—Must a Prince then live in a perpetual state of diffidence?—He should guard himself against deceit; because a whole nation will be the victim of his error. He ought not, therefore, to take any man into his friendship and confidence, till he is perfectly acquainted with his character.—I have a good opinion of Count *Stralzi*, and I have an inclination for him; yet, if I had any secrets, I would not trust him with them, nor repose any confidence in him, till time and circumstances had informed me whether he were really worthy of it.—But why should you expect *that* from time and chance, which you might yourself discover more certainly?—How so?—I will furnish you with the means if you desire it, and will in a few months acquaint you with the particulars.

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I have long since given the Prince to understand, of what importance it is to him to acquire an exact knowledge of the general state of the kingdom, of the particular provinces, and even of the persons of merit they contain: and I have advised him to send young *Sultzback* secretly through all the provinces, with orders to make the most minute observations upon the state of them. He will set out in a week, will travel under a feigned name, and in taking his public leave of the Prince, will give out that he is going to pass six months in France. After his return, I shall engage the Prince to propose the same tour to Count *Stralzi*, who will certainly accept the commission the more readily, as he will be ignorant of the Baron *de Sultzback's* having been already charged with the same. You may well imagine, that on the Count's return we shall compare his memoirs with those of the Baron, and we shall certainly find but little conformity between the relations of the two travellers. Then, in order to know which has made the best observations, and told the truth with most exactness, the Prince and I will make the same tour; and he will see, with his own eyes, to which of the two he ought to give his esteem and confidence. I have spared no pains, as you may easily believe, my dear Baron, to inspire into my pupil "an aversion for taxes." I began with exciting his compassion for the poor; and having endued him with humanity and pity, I now furnish him with information, without which those precious virtues can neither contribute to his own glory, nor to his people's happiness. The present circumstances

circumstances of the state have obliged the minister to raise a new tax; but such a one as by no means falls upon the common people. However, the very word *tax* made an ill impression upon the Prince, and he told me so; but I easily convinced him that the minister had not, on this occasion, belied his usual sagacity and moderation. In short, added I, there are cases in which the best of Princes is obliged to levy new duties, and then nothing can be more equitable, than that he should lay them on the rich; for it is better to take a small portion of the superfluities of the few, than a part of the necessities of life from the wretched multitude.—Nevertheless one sometimes sees the latter method preferred to the former.—Oh, Heavens!—for what reason?—Because the complaints of the rich make a great noise in the world, and the groans of the poor are not heard.—And how can a Prince prevail upon himself to deprive his subjects of their subsistence?—His ignorance alone is the cause of this great evil. He is told, that the tax proposed will not only *not* take from the labourer and artisan, what is necessary for his subsistence, but will still leave him at his ease. He believes it, and is deceived.—A young Prince ought then to know exactly how far his people may be taxed without ruining and rendering them miserable; and this is what I burn with impatience this moment to learn.—I can teach you nothing more truly useful. To acquire this knowledge you must enter into many small and very minute details; but the motives which animate you, will make them all interesting. Two days after this conversation,

versation, as we were talking on the same subject, the Prince suddenly casting his eyes on the clock, cried out, "It is eleven o'clock; I am this moment fifteen years of age; embrace me, and remember your promise!"——What do you mean?——You always told me, when I was fifteen, if you were pleased with my conduct, you would give me the book I have so long desired. Are you satisfied with me?—Yes, very much so.—Well then give me *Telemachus*.——*Telemachus!* What already!—If you would wait another year, you would do me a pleasure.—A year! Oh Heavens!—Come, do not vex yourself; to-morrow, when you rise, you shall have *Telemachus*. The next day the Prince rose before seven o'clock: I entered his apartment with *Telemachus* under my arm; and approaching him—Here, Sir, says I to him, this is the immortal book, in which you will find all your duties traced by a man, who, though living in a court, dared to speak the truth, and feared not to unmask the deepest artifices of intrigue and flattery. If you read this work, as affecting as it is sublime, without being moved, without being melted at every page, ah! return it to me, do not proceed, you are not yet worthy to read it.—Ah! replied the Prince, give it me; if sensibility alone is wanting to make me set a just value upon it, what do you fear? Can an heart of your forming be ignorant of its real worth?——At these words, as you may very well imagine, my dear Baron, I gave him up the *Telemachus*, which was received with as much joy as it had been desired with eagerness.

I expect

I expect with impatience the accounts you have promised me of your voyage. Adieu, my dear Baron; do not forget the little journal of *La Corniche*; for I am quite unacquainted with that part of Italy.

LETTER XXXVIII.

The Baronefs to the Viscountefs.

WE left Nice this morning at five; *Adelaide*, one of my women, and myself, in chairs carried by men; M. *d'Almaine*, *Dainville*, my son, and *Brunel*, upon mules. Miss *Bridget* prefers going by sea to Genoa in the felucca, with the rest of my family.—Leaving Nice, you pass the old castle of Montalban, taken by the French in 1744. Two leagues from Nice, *Dainville* desired me to stop at the tower of Eze, whose situation is admirable, and commands the sea. He, *Adelaide*, and *Theodore*, took a view of it: during which time M. *d'Almaine* and I read, and talked alternately, and in about an hour we resumed our march.—This road is very properly named *La Corniche*: it is like a real cornish, and in many places so narrow that one person can scarce pass. On one side, enormous rocks form a sort of wall, which seems to reach the skies; and on the other are precipices five hundred feet deep; at the bottom of which the sea,
breaking

breaking against the rocks, makes a melancholy and terrifying noise. At every pass that was really dangerous, M. *d'Almaine* made us alight, and handed us over. From Monaco to Manton we breathed a little, for the road is very good.— This last town is agreeably situated on the banks of the sea, and affords a quantity of citron and orange trees, which perfume the air. After leaving Manton, the road again becomes terrible. We begin, however, to accustom ourselves to it, and the view of a number of beautiful cascades, formed by nature, charmed *Adelaide* in such a manner as almost to make her forget the precipices. When we arrived at Bourdequierre, a little town, where we found some superb palm-trees dispersed among very picturesque ruins, we were tempted to stop and make a drawing of the most beautiful point of view we had yet met with. At seven o'clock, night coming on, forced us to stop and sleep here, only ten leagues from Nice. It is called Hospitaletta; but is a most unhospitable place: for the poor people, with whom we now are, being unaccustomed to lodge any one, have neither beds nor supper for us. *Adelaide* and her brother were famished with hunger; and *Brunel*, having with some difficulty procured a few eggs and some rank butter, made an omelette of it and brought it, with an air of triumph, up into the garret, where I have been writing ever since our arrival. The flavour of the omelette, which was smelt at a good distance, filled *Adelaide* and *Theodore* with transport: but the sight of it soon changed their joy into sorrow; not because it was very black and burnt; hunger is not delicate,

cate, and appetite is blind; but because it consisted of five or six eggs only. I observed their uneasiness; and though I had likewise a mind to the omelette, I said I should eat no supper. M. *d'Almaine* said the same, and for the same reason. *Adelaide* and *Theodore* immediately fell upon the omelette, and ate it with an eagerness that caused in me one of the most singular sensations I ever felt in my life. I beheld my children in a garret, lighted only by a pitiful lamp, eating as if they were famished; and I said to myself, "How many unhappy mothers are there in the world, who this very moment suffer that horrid fate, of which the idea alone makes me tremble.—And who see their wretched children partake of a slender repast, insufficient for their subsistence.—Such calamities exist, and unfeeling mortals are regardless of them!"—These reflections filled my soul with inexpressible anguish: fixing my eyes on *Adelaide* and *Theodore*, I felt a tenderness and compassion that rent my very heart; my tears flowed, and I perceived it not: so absorbed was I in that afflicting reverie. At length *Adelaide*, turning that way, observed me, trembled, and flew to me; *Theodore* did the same, and I folded them both in my arms. Never did I feel more, than at that instant, how dear they are to me. I would have answered their questions, but could not. My tears redoubled; they likewise wept both of them. M. *d'Almaine*, confounded at the scene, in vain asked an explanation of it. It was more than a quarter of an hour before I could satisfy him.—After a conversation which carried us on to nine o'clock, M. *d'Almaine*,
with

with his son and *Dainville*, retired to a chamber next to ours. They then brought straw, and made up three beds for *Adelaide*, Mademoiselle *Victoire*, and myself. We spread sheets upon the straw; and *Adelaide* laid herself down as gaily, and slept as soundly, as if she had been in the best bed in the world. While she sleeps, I am writing this journal. It is now eleven o'clock, and time I should repose myself likewise.

Continuation of the Journal of the Baronefs.

St. Maurice.

THIS day has been very fatiguing, though we have advanced no more than five leagues and an half; but we found the roads so bad, that we have performed almost the whole journey on foot, continually coasting the sea, as yesterday, sometimes on the top of a precipice, and sometimes in a narrow pass at the foot of the rocks by the sea-shore, and upon sharp pointed flints; the whole country indeed is barren and frightful: our Porters are the vilest fellows in the world; they understand neither French nor Italian; they talk a jargon unintelligible to every body but themselves; they get drunk, swear and quarrel perpetually; it is difficult for those they carry, not to interest themselves in their disputes; when they see them, all on a sudden, tremble with anger, agitate themselves, totter, and carry the chair

chair with only one hand, that they may be at liberty to gesticulate and menace with the other*. These chairs are not at all like *sedans*, they are narrow and long; the seat has a kind of cradle over it covered with oil-cloth, to keep off the rain; and our legs are extended forward, so that we cannot bend them; and as I am tall, my feet reach beyond the chair. We are tolerably lodged at St. Maurice, a small sea-port; and we shall sleep to-morrow at Pietra.

Continuation of the Journal.

Albenga, Tuesday.

AT length my journal becomes interesting; and surely, my dear friend, I can send you nothing from Venice and Rome, which will give you so much pleasure as the relation I am about to make to you. But I will not anticipate; that in reading this journal you may share the surprise, which I myself felt on the occasion.—The road from St. Maurice to Albenga is full of very frightful passes: but it affords admirable prospects, and among others, that which is seen from the top of the mountain which commands the town of Languella. The descent of that mountain is very steep and very dangerous. We walked down it, and, we may even say, bare-

* The chairmen have shoulder-straps: but it is necessary likewise to hold the poles.

footed;

footed; for the rocks we had been climbing for three days, had so worn our shoes, that the soles were almost entirely gone; and as we had not foreseen that we should walk so much, we had not taken the precaution to provide ourselves with a proper supply. At ten o'clock in the morning we made our chairmen halt on the summit of a mountain, from whence we discovered the town of Albenga, in the midst of a delicious plain; which is a remarkable singularity on this coast, where all the other towns are situated upon rocks. We descended the mountain, and advanced into an immense and fertile plain, surrounded with rocks and majestic mountains, some of which were covered with ice. The barrenness of the rocks, and solemn aspect of the mountains, form a striking contrast with the smiling beauty and fertility of the plain; the meadows are enamelled with pansies and lillies; and the rose-laurel grows here without culture; all the fields are fenced round with vines, formed into arches; and through these long, charming, and open arbours you discover the verdure, the flowers, and the fruits, which these light arcades enclose; every arch of which is ornamented with a festoon of the elegant and flexible branches, which wave to the gentlest gale. In this delicious abode the earth seems cultivated, not for use, but for pleasure only. Every object you meet is agreeable; and it is here, my dear friend, you may see real shepherdesses, instead of those country dowdies, whose night-caps offend you so mightily. All the young girls wear their hair without caps, and place a bouquet of natural flowers on the left side of the head. They are,
almost

almost all, pretty, and particularly remarkable for the elegance of their shape *. Figure to yourself the transports of *Adelaide* and *Theodore* on seeing objects so charming and so new. They asked permission to ramble into the plain, and to walk under the arcades; and in an instant they had got an hundred yards distant. *Theodore* stopped to gather a bouquet; and his sister, pursuing her course, entered a small path, where I lost sight of her. I called to her two or three times, but she was too far off to hear me. I sent *Dainville* in search of her, who soon came back without her; but informed me he had found her, and that she would return presently. I redoubled my pace, and *Dainville* approaching me with a smile, said, we shall not leave Albenga without an adventure which will make a figure in our journal. But where is my daughter, cried I? Hard by, replied he, with a lady beautiful as the day.—As *Dainville* was speaking, *Adelaide* appeared; and running, soon rejoined us; but so fluttered and out of breath, and so transported with her *adventure*, that she stammered, and could only answer in monosyllables: when she had, at length, recovered herself, we sat down on the grass, and she informed us, that soon after she had lost sight of us, she perceived at a distance, in a kind of grove on the left hand of the path she was in, a lady sitting alone on the ground: curiosity led her nearer, and she saw plainly a beautiful woman reading with a good deal of attention. She was

* This description is not exaggerated; it is literally true, and taken from the author's own journal written at Albenga.

dressed

dressed in a robe of white gauze, and had a sorrowful countenance; but a physiognomy full of sweetness and majesty. A young person, who seemed to be her woman, was sitting at a little distance from her. The *heroine* lifted up her eyes at the noise *Adelaide* had made, and seemed surprized to see her; she made her a profound curtsy, and stopt short, not daring to advance. The incognita fixed her eyes upon her, and smiled. Encouraged by this, *Adelaide* approached, and the stranger said in Italian, you are a charming creature; *but most certainly you do not understand me.* *Adelaide's* answering her in Italian, was matter of fresh surprize. She asked her some questions, embraced her tenderly several times; then rose, called her woman, and left her. *Adelaide* adds, that the unknown lady, though not very young, is a perfect beauty; and *Dainville* said, though he had seen her only at a distance, her figure was remarkably striking. After this relation, *Adelaide* begged of me to sleep at Albenga, instead of going to Pietra, as we had designed, and M. *d'Almaine* consented to it.—We are here settled in a tolerably pretty house; we have informed ourselves concerning the *incognita*; and from *Adelaide's* portrait of her, we are assured, that it can be nobody but the Duchess of C——, a person as distinguished and as extraordinary for her virtues and her misfortunes, as for her birth and beauty:—she has been four years at Albenga, and lives retired in an house she has caused to be built in the most solitary part of the plain: she lives in the most reclusive manner; and they add, her beneficence and piety render her the admiration of the whole country.

country. As to her history, it is known but confusedly; and the particulars, which I have been able to collect, are so extraordinary and so improbable, that I shall not yet commit them to paper. You may easily believe that we are curious to know something more particularly of the Duchess of C——. *Adelaide* desires it with more warmth than any of us. Not knowing how to prevail on her to receive us, we have at last followed the opinion of M. d'Almaine, that *Adelaide* should write to her on the subject; and we hope for some success from the infantine grace and simplicity of her billet. It has been sent near an hour, and we have as yet no answer.

Good news and great joy! The answer is just arrived; the Duchess will see us; she has asked us to supper. As she tells *Adelaide* she sups at seven o'clock, and it is now near six, we are this instant going.

Dainville had good reason to promise us a charming adventure!—We no longer know when we shall leave Albenga. We shall stay till we have been able to obtain a more perfect knowledge of the history of the most interesting person I ever saw. Judge yourself, from the particulars of our first visit, if our curiosity be not well founded, and whether it ought not to be very much raised. At a quarter after six we arrived at her house, which is finished with the most elegant simplicity. After passing through two antichambers and a pretty long gallery, we were shewn into a little apartment. *Adelaide*, seeing the Duchess, quitted me and ran to her. The Duchess embraced her two or three times. I approached, and desired *Adelaide* to present me;
and

and Madame *de C*—— received us very graciously. We sat down; and while M. *d'Almaine* was giving her an account of our journey and answering her questions, I examined her with as much pleasure as astonishment. She is thirty-eight or forty years old, and is really a regular and striking beauty: her eyes are black, and in size and shape would be much like yours, were they less languishing: her shape is exactly proportioned; and though by habit she stoops her head a little, she has a most noble air; and when by chance she turns her head, or draws herself up, she appears truly majestic; she has nothing of the Italian vivacity; all her motions are slow; she speaks softly, and even expresses herself with some difficulty. It is soon perceived that she is very absent. All of a sudden she falls in a *reverie*, which has something in it melancholy and striking; and when she comes out of it, she looks with a stupid astonishment on all around her. Her physiognomy is at the same time sweet, interesting, and sorrowful: she has by habit acquired the air of a person who has suffered much; her manners are affectionate and insinuating; and, as much as one can judge from a two hours visit, her sensibility is excessive, her imagination lively, and she has a great deal of wit. During supper she asked many questions about my daughter; said she had one likewise which was her greatest happiness, and that I should see her at Rome. When I testified my surprize at the distance which separated them, she replied, that her daughter came every year, and spent two or three months with her; after which she sighed, and changed the conversation. On getting up from supper,

supper, I observed that her house was rather illuminated than lighted; for all the apartments were filled with lustres, flambeaux, and girandoles. Ah! Madam, said the Duchess, if you knew what reason I have to value light, and to hate obscurity and darkness!—As she spake these words, her eyes were filled with tears, and she fell into the most profound reverie. We left her about nine o'clock; and as I took my leave, she said it gave her pain to think I should depart to-morrow; to which I answered, if she would permit me to wait on her again, I would stay. She pressed my hand, and, embracing me, said, Albenga attracts but few travellers; and though within these four years several strangers have stopped here, I refused to see them; but I wish, Madam, it was in my power to fix *you* here: promise me, however, that you will dine with me to-morrow.—You may easily judge that I accepted the party with pleasure; and that I did not fail to be exact to the appointment. Oh! that I could obtain from her some particulars of her history!—It is most certain, I shall not leave Albenga without doing my utmost to gain that point.

Continuation of the Journal of the Baroneſs.

Albenga, Wednesday evening.

AT last, I am poſſeſſed of this hiſtory, ſo deſired, ſo intereſting, ſo extraordinary!—This precious manuſcript, written by the very hand of the Duchefs *de C*——! I am truſted with it for four-and-twenty hours; and am permitted to tranſlate and take a copy of it!—I have read it—and I ſhall not, without inexpressible regret, leave the heroine of ſuch a hiſtory——This woman, as virtuous and intereſting as ſhe is unfortunate—Oh what a deſtiny is hers!—But, to return to my journal——While *M. d'Almaine* and *Dainville* are ſhut up tranſlating the Duchefs's ſtory, I will relate the tranſactions of the day which procured us ſo inestimable a preſent.—We waited on the Duchefs at eleven o'clock. She propoſed a walk before dinner, and conducted us to a little ſeat, which afforded ſo delightful a proſpect, that my children and *Dainville* were deſirous of drawing it. They preſently made a ſlight ſketch of it; and the Duchefs expreſſing a deſire to ſee ſome of *Adelaide's* performances, I ſent for her port-folio. She was ſurprized to find a child of twelve years and an half old able to ſpeak ſeveral languages, and draw ſo well after nature. She ſings too, ſays I, and plays upon the harp. The harp was ſent for, and, as *Adelaide* had a great deſire to pleaſe, ſhe ſucceeded; and really the Duchefs ſeemed to be charmed with her.—After dinner
ſhe

she proposed another tour, that is to say, just out of the house; for she can neither walk much at a time, nor fast.—We sat ourselves down on a green bank, and she made *Adelaide* again the subject of our conversation. She seems to me, said she, to have great sensibility.—Yes, replied I, very great.—Ah! Madam, rejoined the Duchefs, do your utmost to guard her tender heart from the deadly impressions of love! May she never feel that fatal passion, which is capable of producing so many misfortunes and so many crimes!—She pronounced these words in a tone of voice, that made me shudder. She perceived it, and taking me affectionately by the hand, I know not, says she, whether you have heard my story.—Ah! replied I with eagerness, how happy should I be to hear it from your *own* mouth!—From *my* mouth, cried she; ah, Madam! it is so dreadful, that it would be impossible for me to have resolution enough to relate, though I have had sufficient to write it. I was desirous of leaving to my grand-daughters, still in the tenderest infancy, a relation which may one day be useful to them; a striking lesson, which may teach them two important truths: the first is, that the passions are capable of precipitating us into the deepest abyss of human miseries; and the second, that there are no evils so great which religion cannot enable us to bear.—Oh Heavens! interrupted I, is there then such a precious manuscript? and shall *Adelaide* never read it?—No, Madam, replied the Duchefs,—to such a mother as you I cannot refuse it. Stay here two days longer, and I will put it into your hands.—At these words I felt so lively an emotion of ac-

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knowledgment and joy, as was impossible for me to express, otherwise than by embracing her with a transport, that made her sensible of the very great value I set upon such a favour.—I do not offer it you, says she, as a mark of confidence, but as a proof of friendship. My story is known to every body : at Rome they will tell you all the particulars of it ; but I alone can inform you of my own sentiments and reflections ; and these no doubt will be the most interesting to you.—After this conversation we returned to the house. The Duchess conducted me into her closet ; and taking, from a small cabinet, two thick paper books, closely written,—Here, says she, take this manuscript, and if you think it worth copying, present it to the charming *Adelaide* in my name : I am sure she will not read it without some tears. May it prove a useful lesson to my young friend, and add, if possible, more strength to the good principles you have implanted in her tender mind !

In fine, at five o'clock I quitted the Duchess, to go and read the treasure she had entrusted me with. I forbear to say what impression the perusal made upon me. You yourself shall judge. For whilst I have been writing to you, M. d' *Almaine* and *Dainville* have translated more than half the story : they will finish it to-morrow ; and then *Brunel* shall make two copies of it, one for *Adelaide*, and the other for you, which I will send with this journal, as soon as I come to Genoa.

Continuation

Continuation of the Journal.

Albenga, Thursday.

WE supped last night with the Dutchess. With what heart-felt compassion did we meet so interesting a person!—She had desired us not to mention her adventures, as she could not bear the conversation; but *Adelaide* could not refrain from melting into tears when she embraced her. And we were so taken up with looking on her, and thinking on her misfortunes, that she herself was obliged to find conversation the whole evening. She has made us promise to pass tomorrow with her; so that we shall not leave this place till Saturday afternoon. I have returned her manuscript, and *Brunel* this instant brings me the copy I design for you, which I shall place at the end of my journal.

*The History of the Duchess of C———, written
by herself*.*

HOW shall I have courage to recall particulars of misfortunes, the mere remembrance of which has excited in me such dreadful agitations for so long a time!—How can I write this deplorable history!—O my daughters! you will read it; it will afford you useful and striking lessons—that idea will support my courage.—And thou, who wast made the arbiter of my fate by an unfortunate and sacred tie, whose ashes I am reluctantly going to disturb by relating thy passions and thy crimes, forgive me!—Thy enormities and my misfortunes are but too well known; if they were not, I should have learned how to respect thy memory, and impose on myself an eternal silence. If this writing renews the remembrance of them, at least I shall not dissemble the imprudence and the faults which plunged me into that depth of misery, and drew on me such cruel punishments. — I was born at Rome, sole heiress of an immense fortune, and of one

* The foundation of this history is perfectly true. The nine years of confinement in a cavern, where the sun never penetrated, the pretended death of the Duchess, the manner in which she lived and received nourishment, her deliverance; all these particulars are exactly true. The only invention in this history is love, and the characters of the lover and the friend. The author, in 17—, saw at Rome the Duchess de C———, and every day dined with the father of that interesting person.

of

of the most illustrious families in Italy. I received an excellent education; brought up by the best of mothers, cherished by a tender father, and a family, of which I was the only hope; fortune and nature appeared united in my favour. —I attained my fifteenth year, without having experienced a single sorrow, without having been once ill, without having shed any tears but those of tenderness or joy. I loved to recall the past, I enjoyed with transport the present, and I only saw in the future as bright and happy a condition. I had had for a companion, in my infancy, a young lady, the daughter of a friend of my mother's. I contracted for her a violent friendship. She was ingenuous, had sensibility, but no experience: she could neither advise nor direct me; yet I had an unlimited confidence in her. I loved and respected my mother; but I did not look upon her as a friend, because she had permitted me to take another; she was even pleased at my forming so dangerous a connection. That imprudence cost me dear, and was the principal cause of all my misfortunes. My friend married the Marquis *de Venuzi*, whom she had been in love with for a year. I was in the secret, and my acting as confidante had but too much raised my imagination, and softened my heart. My friend, two days after the wedding, set out for the country. The Marquis took her to a delightful villa, thirty miles from Rome. My mother was of the party; I went with her. The Marchioness *de Venuzi* was three years older than me; she appeared equally prudent and sensible. Though she was only in her nineteenth year, my mother left us entirely at liberty to see

each other alone at all times. One evening after supper the Marchioness proposed our taking a walk in the park. We went by ourselves: on entering a little wilderness, in a turn of the walk, we saw a young man sitting on a bank: on perceiving us, he arose: the great surprise he shewed caused in us the same emotion. We were very near him; the moon shone on his face; we were equally struck with his graceful figure and noble air. After a moment's silence, as he did not retire, the Marchioness asked him who he was; he answered her with as much respect as gallantry, but refused to tell his name, and immediately went away. Very much surprised at this adventure, we directly returned, and trusted the Marquis with it. He smiled, and left us to suppose the young man was not unknown to him. As I shewed a great desire to be farther informed, all I can tell you, said he, is, that this young man is single, that his birth is noble; he has long ardently wished to see you; and if he will consent, to-morrow I will tell you his name. I renewed my questions the next day, and I only received unsatisfactory answers. At night, when my mother was gone to bed, I went down to my friend: we shut ourselves into her closet, and talked of last night's adventure, when, all at once, the door opened, and the Marquis came in, holding a dark lantern in one hand, and conducting with the other the same young man that I had so great a desire to know. I remained immoveable with surprise; the Marquis, approaching me, I present to you, said he, my prisoner, to whom I believe, continued he, laughing, since he has had the imprudence of determining to see you a second time,

time, it will no longer be in my power to give liberty. At these words I blushed, and felt great confusion. In spite of my youth, I had some faint idea of the consequences of such an adventure. I was one moment tempted to go and find my mother, and own all to her; but curiosity restrained me, and I forgot my duty. The Marquis, assuming a more serious air, told us, he was going to trust us with an important secret. I know, added he, the discretion of you both; I am sure you will justify the confidence which you are able to excite. After this preamble, the Marquis made me promise an inviolable secrecy. The young man then told us, he was called Count *de Belmire*; that his father, the Marquis *de Belmire*, was brother to the Duke *de C* --, one of the greatest families in Naples; that the latter, head of his house, having quarrelled with his brother, found means to ruin him at court, and persecuted him with such cruelty, that he forced him to leave his country and settle in France, where the Marquis *de Belmire* had an affair of honour four years afterwards, which obliged him to seek another retreat; that the Marquis *de Venuzi*, his intimate friend, then in France, just returning to Italy, determined him to come secretly to the neighbourhood of Rome, by offering him a retreat at his country-house; that he had been concealed for three months in the house we were in; that the young Count, having heard often of me, could not resist the desire of being introduced to me, and, after the transient glimpse by moon-light, he had been more urgent with the Marquis to procure him this delightful interview, on which he set so high a value; and

that he was to depart to-morrow with his father for Venice. After having listened to this recital, I got up; and, notwithstanding the entreaties of the Marquis, retired. I returned to my chamber, overwhelmed with sorrow. I dared not reflect on what had just passed; I was afraid to interrogate my heart, or examine my conduct; I could not conceive how I had been able, in the middle of the night, unknown to my mother, to listen to a young man, and a stranger, who had dared to talk to me of love. I saw clearly that I ought to have no confidence in the Marquis; even his wife was not in a situation to advise me; I shuddered at the danger of my situation: a prophetic horror seemed to tell me, I was going to lose my reputation irrevocably, my repose, in short, all the happiness I had enjoyed till then.—The Marchioness *de Venuzi* too soon regained her influence over me; she incessantly talked to me of the Count *de Belmire*. These dangerous conversations did not soothe my melancholy, though they perverted my understanding. We staid three months in the country, when we returned to Rome. Towards the end of the winter, there were many entertainments given; the Marquis gave a masqued ball; I went there with my mother. At two in the morning, the Marchioness proposed my going into her room to change my dress. We went out of the hall, and in crossing a little gallery, almost dark, I observed a man following us: how great was my surprise, when the mask approaching me, and falling on his knees, made himself known to be the Count *de Belmire*! Notwithstanding my astonishment, and the secret joy I felt at seeing him again,

my

my first impulse was to endeavour to escape. He held my gown, begging me to grant him a moment's conversation: he conjured the Marchioness to beg me to hear him; she united her entreaties, and I had at last the weakness to consent. The Count told me his father's affair was happily settled; that he had been for six weeks at Naples; that he had again seen the Duke *de C*—— his brother, to whom he was sincerely reconciled. "My father," continued he "sets out in a month for France; some interest concerning his fortune recalls him; but he is absolutely determined to return again to his own country. And I, before I follow him in this last journey, determined to know my fate. I came secretly from Naples to learn if the tender vows I presume to make are entirely rejected! Speak, Madam! if you hate me, I shall leave you for ever——If you despise me, I am determined:——I renounce Italy; I shall never be seen here again——Speak! You can restore me to my country, or banish me for ever." As the Count pronounced these last words, I could not restrain my tears: that answer was but too well understood; the Count asked for no other. A thousand times he assured me of his eternal love. Certain of my affections, and of returning to Rome in six months in a condition to demand me in marriage, though his fortune was not so considerable as mine, all appeared to justify his hopes; and yet my heart could not participate them. Two months after this interview, which deprived me of all the tranquillity of my life, the Duke *de C*—— came to Rome. I saw

him at an assembly at the French ambassador's. When he was introduced to me, I felt an extraordinary sensation, and which perhaps proceeded only from the bad character the Marquis *de Venuzi* had given of him, who, in speaking to me of his proceedings with the Marquis *de Belmire*, had represented him as equally vindictive and dissembling. The Duke was about thirty-six years of age, perfectly handsome, yet in his eyes and eye-brows was marked an inauspicious gloom, which struck one much more at first than the noble symmetry of his figure. He had a look that was severe, piercing, and wild: when he wished to soften it, he made it ambiguous and deceitful. His manner was in general disdainful; and although he was not deficient in politeness in some respects, his stile of behaviour was as decisive as it was imperious. Proud of his birth, fortune, employments, and interest at court, and of his success with the women, he thought nothing was ever to resist his inclinations, or oppose his will. Passionate, violent, spoilt by pride and prosperity, he knew not how to conquer his passions, or suppress his resentments. Implacable, through weakness and vanity, he gloried in never forgiving. He hated with fury, and sacrificed all for the horrid pleasure he found in being revenged. Such was the Duke *de C*——. I felt an invincible aversion for him from the first moment I beheld him. Unfortunately for me, I inspired him with a very different impression. He got introduced to my mother, and a fortnight after, my father told me, the Duke had demanded me in marriage; and that I must prepare for the ceremony in a month.

month. My father added, 'I have given my word without asking your consent; for I doubted not your accepting with pleasure the greatest match in Italy; a man who adores you, and whose person is so agreeable.' I received this declaration (which appeared the sentence of my death) without being able to utter a word. My father loved me, but was absolute; therefore what could I say? could I have the comfort of complaining to my mother! with what face could I own my faults! or dare confess that I had disposed of my heart without her approbation! It was then I experienced the full force of the fatal imprudence of my conduct, and the greatest misfortune that could happen to a young woman, that of not having looked on her mother as a true friend and confidante. Not being able to speak or complain, burying in the bottom of my soul all my sorrows and misfortunes, I avoided the Marchioness *de Venuzi*, whose dangerous advice I dreaded. I thought obedience alone could expiate my faults. I submitted to my fate, and sacrificed my happiness to the respect due to the will of my parents. I married the Duke *de C——*, and set out almost directly with him for Naples. When we arrived in the city, and entered the palace where I was to spend my life, separated from my mother, from my friends, from my family, I suffered emotions of despair bitter beyond description. The Duke attributed my profound melancholy to my affection for my parents, endeavoured to soothe me by protestations of an affection, which it was not in my power to return. I appeared at court, and I soon found the Duke was excess-

sively jealous. It gave me but little vexation; I should have preferred retirement; but the Duke's vanity retained me at court, notwithstanding my taste and his jealousy. I had been married seven months, when I heard the Marquis *de Belmire* had died in France; that he had in his will appointed the Duke guardian to his son, who was only eighteen years of age; and that the latter returning to Italy, was taken ill at Turin. A fortnight after, the Duke coming into my room, said, he had just heard from his nephew, whose health was re-established. He will return no more to Naples; he writes to you, to entreat you to solicit my permission for him to travel for two years. Here is his letter. At these words, the Duke gave me a letter, unsealed. I took it trembling, and read aloud, with faltering voice, what follows:

“ Madam,
“ Although I have not the honour of being
“ known to you, I have hopes that my mi-
“ series are sufficient to inspire you with some
“ compassion!—I have lost the tenderest and
“ best of fathers.—Grief and despair had al-
“ most brought me to the brink of the grave!—
“ The unkind affiduities of cruel friends have
“ recalled me to life!—But to what an ex-
“ istence am I restored.—I have lost all that
“ could make it valuable.—Forgive me, Ma-
“ dam, for troubling you with a sorrow, to
“ which you are a stranger; my heart over-
“ flows!—Oh! will you at least condescend to
“ excuse, to pity me!—The last will of my
“ father has made me dependant on my uncle;
“ but

“ but I cannot obey his orders to return to
 “ Naples.—My father was born and lived there
 “ twenty years.—Every thing will recall the
 “ most cruel ideas!—No, I will never go!—I
 “ am sure, Madam, you will approve this deli-
 “ cacy ; and that you will persuade my uncle to
 “ revoke an order, which I have not power to
 “ obey. Obtain for me, Madam, the permission
 “ of travelling—of flying—of banishing myself
 “ from Naples.—In a word, the liberty of carry-
 “ ing far from Italy the sorrows and misfortunes
 “ I shall retain to my last breath. I am, with
 “ respect, &c.

“ The Count *de Belmire*.”

I can give you no idea of the dreadful uneasiness I felt in reading this letter. I was afraid it was impossible not to understand the double meaning of it—Besides, the Duke was of all men the most jealous and suspicious ; but still ignorant that his nephew had been at Rome, convinced I never could have seen him, he had not the slightest notion of the truth. As for me, unable to keep those sentiments to myself which rent my heart, I wrote the next day to the Marchioness *de Venuzi* a letter, in which I had the audacity to complain of my fate, and lament the fatal passion I could not overcome. The Marchioness, in her answer, questioned me on the Duke's conduct. I answered her freely ; and did not conceal from her, that every day I discovered in the Duke faults, vices, and a determined violence of temper, which too much justified the antipathy I had for him. It was thus by fresh imprudencies I dug a pit for my
own

own destruction. About this time I enjoyed the happiness of seeing my father and mother again; I was near lying-in; they came to Naples to be with me. I was brought to bed of a daughter. I asked, and obtained permission to suckle her. This tender employment, during the time it lasted, suspended my sorrows, and made me insensible of the Duke's ill treatment, who for a long time had ceased to restrain the impetuosity of his temper before me. The day after I had weaned my child, the Duke came to me, and said, we must immediately set out for an estate he had twelve leagues from Naples. My daughter was with me; I took her in my arms; and without uttering a word followed the Duke. We got into the carriage; I held my daughter on my lap; I caressed her; the Duke was silent; during the journey he appeared absorbed in thought; when we arrived at the castle, we crossed a draw-bridge; the rattling of the chains made me shudder; at this moment I looked at the Duke. What is the matter with you, said he? The ancient appearance of this castle seems to surprize you. What! do you think you are entering a prison! He uttered these words with a forced and malicious smile, and I observed his eyes sparkling with an inhuman joy, which shocked me.—Wishing to conceal my terror, I leant my head on my daughter's, and could not restrain my tears. My child feeling them trickle down her face, began to cry; her cries pierced the very bottom of my soul; I pressed her to my bosom with the tenderest affection, and my sobs redoubled. Thus I got out of the carriage. The Duke snatched my daughter out of my

my

my arms, and gave her to one of his attendants ; and seizing one of my hands, he led, or rather dragged me towards the castle, made me go up a flight of steps, at the top of which was a long gallery. The evening came on ; the gallery we crossed was very large and dark ; the Duke walked extremely fast, when stopping all at once ; you tremble, said he ; what occasions this fear ? Are you not with a husband whom you love, and who ought to cherish you ?— Oh, Heavens ! cried I, what means that gloomy and disturbed look, that terrible voice.—Come, come, replied he ; we are going to finish the explanation. At these words, almost carrying me in his arms, for I could neither follow him or walk, he took me out of the gallery into a large bed-chamber. I flung myself into a chair, and gave a free vent to my tears. He went out, and soon returned, holding a light, which he set on a table opposite to me, and seated himself by it. I dared not look at him ; I waited, trembling, with eyes cast down, scarce fetching my breath, sinking with terror, for his breaking silence—My memory recalled at once all my faults ; I had a confused idea that the fatal secret of my heart had been discovered. That heart, filled with a criminal passion, beat with fear, and trembled before an irritated judge.— Oh ! what courage innocence would have given me !—But I felt myself culpable, and I had not courage to support those horrid thoughts which my remorse occasioned me. At last the Duke spoke : Enough of enjoying the secret reproaches of your conscience—It is time to fill up the measure of your confusion.—Read those letters,
that

that I have copied myself.—He then gave me a packet of papers; and seeing I hesitated about taking them, he took out one, and read aloud. From the first words I knew it was one of the letters I had written to the Marchioness *de Venuzi*, in which I spoke without disguise of the sentiments which filled my soul, and of my invincible aversion for the Duke. Oh! I am undone! cried I.—Perfidious woman, replied the Duke, could not I make you happy!—I chose you, I preferred you, I adored you; and you hate me, and deem yourself unhappy—I inspire you with *an invincible aversion*!—Ah! I will justify your dislike—You shall have just cause to hate me!—Betrayed, dishonoured by you, do you think I will suffer such outrages with impunity?—Stop, interrupted I, you may accuse and punish me without aspersing me. I am really culpable; but if I could not overcome an unhappy passion, at least your honour and mine are without stain. I have only to reproach myself, that friendship drew from me such an imprudent confession. Perjured woman, the Duke replied with fury, taking up one of the letters, listen to your condemnation. He then read the following sentence: “That
 “ object that nothing can erase from my heart.
 “ Alas! he is as much to be pitied as I am!
 “ Does he not know to what excess I love
 “ him!—Does he not know to what excess I
 “ reproach myself for a confession, that ren-
 “ ders me every day more culpable and mis-
 “ erable!”—I but too well recollected this sen-
 tence in one of my letters; I also remembered,
 I had not mentioned the name of the Count *de*
Belmire.

Belmire in any of them. I had spoke of him in so indirect a manner, that it was impossible to fix the date of the passion I acknowledged: the Duke, violently jealous of two men at the court of Naples, who had shewn evident marks of admiration as soon as I appeared, fixed upon one of those as the object of my love. That supposition rendered me truly criminal in his eyes; for, after the sentence he had just read, it seemed to prove I had confessed my sentiments since my marriage. It was (to justify myself,) necessary to declare, that when I gave him my hand, I had not a heart to give; but I was not ignorant of the despicable opinion he had of women, and the odious constructions he formed; after that knowledge, my daughter's interest silenced me. I did not leave Rome till six weeks after my marriage; the Duke was but too capable of conceiving injurious suspicions on the birth of my daughter, if he knew I loved before I saw him—Besides, that confession would have led to the discovery of the whole truth. He would have recollected a thousand circumstances to confirm it; the letter I received from his nephew; my confusion in reading it; my blushes every time his name was mentioned; he might discover the connection, that the Marquis *de Venuzi* had with the Count *de Belmire's* father. In one word, removing all his suspicions, which he had fixed at Naples, was risking a secret, which it was impossible to betray without exposing the object of my affections to all the fury of his resentment, rendered more formidable as the Count *de Belmire* depended absolutely upon him: he was not nineteen; the Duke

Duke was his uncle and guardian. All these reflections at once presented themselves to my imagination, and plunged me in the greatest embarrassment. Not being able to justify myself, I dared not answer. The Duke construed my silence into a tacit avowal, which confirmed his dishonour and my shame. His passion then knew no bounds; he arose, and approaching me with a face enflamed, and his eyes sparkling with fury; then, said he, you have nothing to alledge in your defence?—Alas! answered I, are you in a condition to hear me?—I call Heaven to witness, I am innocent.—You innocent! interrupted he; dare you maintain that? Have you not written yourself, that your lover *knows to what excess he is beloved*:—and yet, replied I, shedding a torrent of tears, I am innocent; indeed, I am.—Hypocritical monster! cried the Duke; tremble at the vengeance ready to overwhelm you.—At these words, pronounced in a menacing and terrible voice, I expected to hear the irrevocable sentence of my destruction. I threw myself on my knees; and lifting my hands to Heaven: O God, cried I! God, that art my sole resource, protect me! Rise, said the Duke, in a softer voice; sit down, and listen to me. I obeyed, with a timid and supplicating look. He was some moments without speaking. At last, fetching a deep sigh: You ought to know, said he, how greatly I am offended!—You, who accuse me of being furious and vindictive! You, ungrateful, to whom I have given every proof of love, you have reason now to dread the effects of so just a resentment.—Yet—it is possible for me to forgive you.—Your sincerity
alone

alone can mitigate my anger; remember that: henceforth the least disguise will be your ruin.—I can be satisfied with one victim.—But one I will have.—Name, without hesitation, the villain who seduced you from your duty, and made you break your vows.—No, interrupted I, no; I have neither broke my vows, nor been seduced from my duty.—I will, replied the Duke, raising his voice, I will know the name of your lover: I command you to tell me. At that instant, I felt all the horrors of my destiny: but with my danger I felt my resolution increase: preferring even death to the baseness he proposed. If you must have one victim, replied I, sacrifice that you have in your power. Let fall on me all the weight of your vengeance; for the name you demand, you shall never know from me. Astonished, confounded at my courage and resolution, the Duke remained immoveable for a moment; he could not find an expression to describe his rage and indignation. At last, eagerly exclaiming: Unhappy woman, said he, I shall never know it!—Ah! I see, that you have no idea, how far my rage will carry me; you do not yet know me!—I expect every thing; I am unfortunate enough to brave death.—Death!—Cease to flatter thyself; go, it is not death I design for thee—My hatred and my fury have been buried in the bottom of my soul for a year; that time I have been meditating the punishment of thy infidelity, and dost thou think that my vengeance can be satisfied in a moment!—No, thou shalt not die.—Indeed thy grave is prepared; but thou must descend into it alive,
and

and there thou wilt not find that death thou desirest.—At these dreadful words I felt all my blood freeze in my veins; my eyes closed, and I entirely lost the use of my senses. When I recovered, I found myself in the arms of my women. I asked eagerly for her who was the most attached to me, the only one I had brought from Rome. They told me, she remained at Naples. I apprehended it was by the Duke's orders, who was afraid without doubt of a witness so attentive and watchful; that circumstance raised my terror to the utmost. I spent the night surrounded by my women, constrained by their presence, and yet dreading to be alone, not daring to complain before them, nor to send them away, suffering all the torments occasioned by remorse, fear, and the expectation of a dreadful catastrophe. About six in the morning I desired them to conduct me to my daughter's apartment. She was still asleep. I sent away her women. I sat down by her cradle. The sight of her, far from mitigating my sorrows, augmented them. Alas! dear child, said I, thou sleepest in peace; thou tastest the sweets of repose; thou canst neither feel nor partake the bitter sorrows of thy unhappy mother!—I see thee perhaps for the last time!—O receive my most tender blessings!—O God, pursued I, throwing myself on my knees, I resign myself to my horrid fate; but may my daughter be happy!—May she live in peace and innocence!—If they have the cruelty to take me from her, great God, protect her, be a mother to her!—At these words my sobs redoubled, and stopped my utterance. In that instant, the door suddenly

suddenly opened, and the Duke appeared. I shuddered at the sight of him; my tears stopped. I arose; unable to support myself, I fell into the great chair. Well, said the Duke, has reflection made you more reasonable? Do you feel the consequence of opposing my will? A deep sigh was all my answer.—That name I have demanded—are you still determined never to tell me? I lifted my eyes to Heaven; I persisted in my silence.—I will have a positive answer.—Will you, or will you not, tell the name? I cannot, answered I.—Ah! cried the Duke, thou passest thy own sentence! Look at that child, and take your leave of her for ever. — No, interrupted I, you cannot have the cruelty to separate me from it.—Oh! leave me my child, permit at least that I may sometimes see it, and I will support without murmuring all that your hatred can inflict.—Alas! is your heart really inaccessible to pity?—Ah! if it is, whatever destiny you have prepared for me, you will merit more compassion than I!—But I cannot believe it.—No, you will not deprive me of my child for ever!—That moment she awaked; she opened her eyes, and smiling on her father, lifted up her little hands, almost joined, towards him. Alas! said I, she seems to plead for me! Oh, my child! my dear child! why canst not thou speak? Thou wouldst soften thy father!—Then I would have taken her in my arms; but the Duke seized her: Leave her, said he, she is no longer yours.—Oh! cried I, take my life, or restore my child!—Must I, to appease you, fall at your feet?—Behold me.—In saying these words, I cast myself at his feet; I bathed them with

with my tears; I embraced his knees.—My pride felt no humiliation, as I was begging for my child.—The barbarian appeared to enjoy my condescension; he gazed on me for a moment; then pushing me away with fury, he made some steps towards the door. I followed him on my knees, crying, my child! my child!—The child, quite terrified, gave a plaintive cry, stretching out her arms to me. She seemed to take a mournful leave of me.—Alas! at the same moment I lost sight of her, the Duke burst out of the room, and left me in the height of despair. He returned a moment after, and compelled me to go to my apartment. Then composing his countenance, You think, said he, my heart unfeeling, and yet—He stopped, and cast down his eyes, those furious and inauspicious eyes, which might have discovered his horrid artifice.—I was in his power; I was ignorant of his dreadful intentions; I saw no interest he could have in dissimulation; I was only eighteen; I thought he must reproach himself for the excess of his cruelty; and that at least the first vengeance he had meditated would be softened. A ray of hope reanimated my heart: I again talked of my daughter; the Duke listened, with a gloomy air, but without shewing any anger: he even pretended to feel a tenderness for me which he endeavoured to hide. He gave me to understand, that his love for me was the sole motive of his violent conduct: he finished by saying, if I took care of my health, I might see my daughter again. So dear a hope, made me forget all my sufferings. Seeing the Duke less cruel, I thought myself more culpable; I felt that he ought

ought to hate me, and that after my letters he might think me really criminal. I excused his fury; I was deeply affected with the compassion I perceived he felt for me; and whilst the most sincere repentance caused my tears to flow, the cruel author of my misfortunes secretly applauded the success of his black artifices, and every thing was prepared for my destruction.

A violent fever, occasioned by my extreme sorrows, obliged me to go to bed. The Duke appeared then to feel the greatest uneasiness; he sent a courier to Naples for two physicians; he never quitted my bed-side; before my women he testified the greatest tenderness; said every thing to persuade me his love exceeded his resentment; and positively assured me, that as soon as I had lost my fever, I should see my daughter again. At this promise I forgot all he had made me suffer: I took one of his hands and pressed it between mine; I bathed with tears of gratitude that barbarous hand, that in a few hours would drag and throw me into the bottom of a horrible dungeon. The physicians assured him my illness was not dangerous; and desiring to return to Naples, they went in two days. The morning of their departure the Duke affected more anxiety on my illness; and although my fever was gone, he obliged me to keep my bed. As he made all my women watch me the three preceding days, they were overcome by fatigue; he sent them to rest themselves for the whole day; saying he would watch me, with one of his valets and an old woman, keeper of the castle. These two witnesses were not chosen without design. He gave them the preference to all the others,

others, because he knew them both to be as credulous as they were ignorant. The curtains of my bed were drawn: I thought my women were still watching me: at noon I perceived that I had only in my chamber those two people, whom I have just mentioned. I expressed my surprize. The Duke approached my bed, saying I should not be the worse attended, and that he would not leave me. Ah! why, replied I with emotion?—I am no longer ill.—The only answer he gave me was, begging me not to speak; and endeavouring all he could to quiet me, he sat down by the side of my bed. Without knowing why, I felt uneasy, my eyes were filled with tears; the Duke appeared distressed, agitated; and I observed an extraordinary alteration in his countenance. About three in the afternoon, he desired me to give him my arm; I gave it trembling; he felt my pulse; and directly he went to the two attendants, told the valet-de-chambre aloud to run to the stables, and send an express to Naples for a physician; and the old woman to go and fetch the chaplain. After having given these orders, he added, with a despairing voice, *She is dying! She is dying!*—Conceive, if it be possible, the excess of my fright and surprize.—My first thought was to get up and fly; but I fell again on the bed without strength, with a beating at my heart which deprived me of breath, and a cold tremor which rendered me motionless. My two attendants, after having received each a commission, that at least would take them three quarters of an hour, went and left me alone with the Duke. Then he came to me, and giving me a cup; Take,

said

said he, with a low voice, swallow this draught.—At these words my hair stood an end, a cold sweat ran down my face. I thought I was come to the last moments of my life; for I doubted not of his giving me poison.—Drink then, replied he.—Ah, answered I, what do you give me?—What you must take.—Give me then time to implore everlasting mercy.—What! do you dare to suspect me? Do you accuse me of a crime?—Alas! it is fate and my own imprudence I most accuse.—O my God! continued I, clasping my hands, pardon me, forgive my persecutor, comfort my father and mother, protect my child! After this short prayer, I felt all my courage revive; I dared to hope that my resignation made me worthy to appear before God. I cast on the Duke a confident look: he was pale, trembling, and astonished; he stammered out some broken words, and with one hand lifting up my head, with the other he put the cup to my lips. Then, without resistance, I drank all the liquor he gave me, thinking I had received my death. I fell back on my pillow, having resigned my life to God. Some minutes after my eyes grew heavy, and closed; a total numbness entirely deprived me of speech and thought; I sunk into a lethargic slumber. In about half an hour the old woman and valet returned. The Duke, his hair in disorder, and his face bathed in tears, ran to meet them; and said I, had just expired. He brought them again into my chamber, in order, he said, to acquire a confirmation of his misfortune, or to assist me if I had still any remains of life. He approached my bed; having had the precaution

to shut the curtains, and make my room extremely dark, he pretended to give me all imaginable assistance: afterwards he appeared to give himself up to the most violent despair. The chaplain arrived: he ordered him to read the prayers for the dead. During this time my women awaked, and all the servants came running. The Duke was on his knees at my bedside. My two attendants recounted to the whole house all they had done to endeavour to recall me to life. After this account, the Duke half opened for an instant my curtains: I was pale and motionless, and nobody doubted of my death. The Duke ordered all the people to go into the next room; he remained in mine, and kept the chaplain with him, an old man of eighty. He made him continue the prayers for the dead till midnight. Then he sent all his people to rest. He declared he would not have me buried till the next evening; and that he should pass the remainder of the night there, not being able to tear himself from me. He shut all the doors of my apartment. He placed the chaplain and my two attendants in an antichamber, separated from mine by three large rooms. He told them he should not leave me till seven o'clock in the morning; that he would remain alone with me, that nothing might disturb either his sorrows or his prayers. All the house, exceedingly fatigued with watching, readily availed themselves of the permission to go to their repose, and were in a profound sleep at four o'clock in the morning, when, by degrees, coming out of my lethargy, I awoke. Opening my eyes, and recovering
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the use of my senses, I perceived the Duke standing by my bed-side. The sight of him startled me, although I had no remembrance of what had happened to me. Then, looking at him stedfastly, I had a confused recollection that he was irritated against me; I felt an emotion of fear; I turned away my head: endeavouring to recover myself, and recall past ideas, a thousand vague and fantastic forms arose in my imagination; I fell into a stupor, which was followed by a kind of fainting. The Duke made me smell at some sal-volatile, and swallow some drops, which entirely revived me. I raised myself up; I looked around me with astonishment. My ideas growing by degrees less confused, I recollected that I thought I had taken poison; and I almost doubted my existence.—O what miracle has saved my life, cried I, at last! You have only felt a vain terror, said the Duke; be calm, banish those injurious fears. I dared not answer; I half opened my curtains; I looked round the room; and seeing I was alone with the Duke, my fears increased, as I had entirely recovered my senses. Why then do you alone watch me, said I?—You shall know; get up directly. At these words he gave me a gown; he helped me to put it on; and supporting me in his arms, he conducted, or rather carried me into a great chair. As he saw me weak and trembling, he gave me more of the draught that I had taken before. And after a moment's silence; I shall now hide nothing from you.—The draught you took yesterday was a sleeping potion.—And wherefore?—Listen to me without interruption. You have

betrayed and dishonoured me. I have offered you forgiveness, you have refused it. Convicted of infidelity, you still nourish a criminal passion at the bottom of your heart. Neither my displeasure nor menaces could make you declare the name of your lover. You perhaps thought that my consideration for your family would prevent my taking your child from you, and depriving you of liberty. You think, without doubt (for your hatred will judge me capable of any crime) that the only means I had for revenge, was secretly to attempt your life; and that *invincible aversion* that you have for me, determined you to die!—But know, that you shall live, and be for ever separated from your parents, your friends, servants, and the whole world!—O Heavens! cried I, and do you think, barbarous man, a tender father and the best of mothers will not demand me of you?—They will receive to-morrow, replied the Duke, the false account of your death.—Great God!—And how could you?—I have already announced your death in the castle. During your profound sleep, all my people came to see you.—Alas! interrupted I, bursting into tears, I no longer live but to you?—Ah! I see all the horrors of my fate!—You do not yet know all, said the Duke; learn that I have in this castle vast subterraneous places, unknown to all the world, and where the light never penetrates.—O God! it is then all over; I am lost without redemption!—No, replied the Duke, your fate is still in your own hands; I can go in a moment, and wake my people, and declare to them you were only in a lethargy. I
have

Have not sent my letter to your father. I can forgive, and restore you again to the world.— I only exact from you one word, one single word.—I have told you, I must have a victim. Name your lover, and I will grant you life; I will restore you to your rank and to the world! — What do you propose to me? To deliver up to your resentment an object who, I repeat to you, has never injured you. Ah! I should be unworthy to live, if I had the baseness to consent to it!—Consider it well, said the Duke, darting at me a furious look; another refusal, and I drag you to that dark abode from whence nothing can release you. To-morrow your father and mother will mourn your death, or rejoice at your recovery. To-morrow you will again see your daughter, and the sun; or for ever be deprived of light, groaning at the bottom of a horrible dungeon: in short, to-morrow we shall see you in this castle enjoying perfect health, or be attending your funeral. Reflect; this moment passed, no hope of pardon remains. Your repentance may implore in vain; I shall have no longer the possibility of granting it.

At this urgent and dreadful speech I rose up dismayed. I turned my eyes fearfully towards the door, and, giving a lamentable shriek, Ah! why am I then abandoned by the whole world? My daughter! I shall live, and I shall never see thee more! My father! my mother! to-morrow you will weep my death! My child! oh let me once more see my child!—Say one word, replied the Duke, and in a quarter of an hour your child shall be in your arms. At these words I felt my heart torn to pieces. I remained silent for a

moment; I thought the Count *de Belmire* was absent; that he was not to return for a year; during that time I could easily inform him; besides, an ingenuous confession would make known my innocence. But the cruelty of my persecutor came all at once to my remembrance, and I quickly rejected this ill-grounded temptation. Who could assure me that such a confession would restore to me my daughter or my liberty? Ought I not to think, on the contrary, that the Duke, certain of my hatred, would not renounce the vengeance he had meditated, or content himself with softening the inhuman rigour? And in that doubt, could I be tempted to give up to his fury the object of my love? All these considerations presented themselves to my imagination with the greatest rapidity. The Duke thought I wavered. He urged me again; adding, that the day would soon appear; it is time you determine: I go and awake my people, and tell them that you live; or go and conduct you to your tomb. Speak—Will you name the author of your misfortunes and mine? At that question, I lifted up my eyes to Heaven: recalling all my strength, I replied, I cannot!—What do you say, unhappy woman! interrupted the Duke—No, give up that hope, said I, I will never tell you.—Perfidious! cried the Duke, then thou preferrest thy lover to thy child, liberty, and life!—To the whole world!—Henceforth tremble! The moment of vengeance is now come!—As he finished these words, he endeavoured to seize me by the arms. Penetrated with fear and horror, I escaped. I ran to the other end of the room; and casting
my

my arms round one of the bed-posts, I kept fast hold. In this agitation my head-dress came off, and my hair fell on my shoulders. The Duke came to me; he stopped; he appeared surpris'd, struck, observing me a moment in silence. Then pulling me from the bed-post, he carried me over against a glass. Unfortunate woman! said he, contemplate for the last time that beauty, which is going to be hid for ever in perpetual darkness! Lift up those eyes; look at thyself. Do not be more cruel than I am. Think of thy youth, of thy charms, compassionate thy own fate: thou canst still change it—I could not then forbear casting a timorous and languishing look on the glass. I presently shut my eyes, and I felt some tears steal from my eye-lids.—Well, replied the Duke, are you still resolute?—Ah! returned I, have I not refused your offers of restoring my child?—Scarce had I uttered these words when the Duke, transported with rage, caught me in his arms, and carried me out of the room. I made no resistance; the violence of my fright made me dumb and motionless. After having crossed two or three rooms, he made me go down a little private stair-case, and I found myself in a large court: at the end of it there was a door, which the Duke opened; we went out, and I saw we were in the garden. That instant the Duke perceiving day appear; It is the last time, says he, thy eyes will ever behold the sun rise!—I threw myself on my knees, and raising my eyes to Heaven, O God! I cried; God, who knowest my innocence, wilt thou suffer me to be buried alive, and deprived for ever of the light of heaven?—As I said these words, the Duke dragg'd me

about twenty paces to a rock; and putting a key behind a large stone, a trap-door opened directly—I shuddered—The Duke stopped: this moment is still left you; this is your tomb; it is but half open. Repent at last; convince me of your remorse by a sincere acknowledgment, and I am ready to pardon you. Perhaps you think, that at the instant of accomplishing my just vengeance, I may dread to put it in execution; but I have long meditated it; all is foreseen; and nothing can stop me. He then recounted all the dreadful precautions he had taken: he told me he had a wax figure made, pale and livid, which he should put in my bed; and that, under a pretence of fulfilling an act of piety, he should bury it himself, with the assistance of the old woman, who would be a spectator and witness of this action, without his being obliged to place any confidence in her. Finally, added he, will you accept the pardon I again deign to offer you for the last time? Speak; sacrifice your lover to my resentment; tell me his name, or renounce for ever light, liberty, and the world. At these words, raising my arms towards the rising sun, as if to take an everlasting leave of the heavens, whose bright and majestic clouds presented the most glorious sight; this contemplation elevated my soul, and restored all my courage. I cast with disdain my eyes on the earth: turning towards the Duke, Take your victim, said I with a firm voice—At the same instant he dragged me in; my heart beat violently; I turned my head once more to behold the light of the sun, which I was going to abandon for ever. We descended into a dark cavern; my legs trembled so they could not support me. Agitated by dreadful convulsions,

vulsions, I struggled in the arms of my barbarous persecutor, and I fell at his feet without sense or motion. I know not how long I remained in that condition. Alas! I came to life again only to abhor my shocking existence! How shall I describe to you the horror which seized me, when, on opening my eyes, I found myself alone in those vast dungeons, encompassed with impenetrable darkness, and lying on a straw mat! —I uttered a plaintive scream, and from the bottom of the cavern the echo repeated it. It made me shudder, and redoubled the fear and terror which oppressed me!—O God! said I, is this the only voice which will in future answer me! the only one that I shall hear! The idea of it made me shed a torrent of tears.—At this moment I heard the door of my prison open, and the Duke appeared with a lantern in his hand: he set down by my side a pitcher full of water, and some bread. —Here, said he, is your future nourishment; you will find it every day in the wheel* you see opposite to you; I shall bring it you myself; I shall put it in this wheel, and I shall never re-enter this horrid dungeon†. At these words I looked about me; I saw an immense cavern, the extent of which the eye could not penetrate. The part I was in was hung with coarse straw mats, in order to keep it from the cold and damp; for the barbarian who threw me into this

* The wheel, or turning box, in a nunnery, is a machine by which they receive and give out provisions or any thing else, without seeing or being seen.

† The unhappy *Duchess de C*——— received also regularly, in the same manner by the wheel, linen and some garments, when she indispensibly wanted them.

dreadful abode, had taken every precaution to preserve my life.—After having considered with trembling all that surrounded me, I turned towards my cruel jailor; and discovering a hatred so long concealed and so well founded, I dared in that moment to reproach him with the severity of his cruelty, and painted to him all the horror and detestation he had inspired me with. He listened to me for some time with a settled fury in his eyes; then, not being able to contain himself, he fell into the most terrible passion, and all at once hastily left me. From that day he entered my prison no more. When he came to bring me food, he always knocked at the wheel till I answered him, and then went away without uttering a word. I soon repented having augmented, if it was possible, by my reproaches, his hatred and resentment. I recollected that he was the father of my child, and that dear child was under his care. Notwithstanding the horror of my situation, hope was not yet absolutely banished from my heart. The more I reflected on it, the probability appeared less, that he really meant to detain me for ever in that dreadful captivity. I even flattered myself that he had not announced my pretended death, either in his house, or to my family; that he had found some other means to elude their enquiries; and that he would reserve the possibility of making me appear when he chose. How could I imagine he would impose on himself the painful necessity of bringing me, every other day, the necessaries of life? And that he would be consequently obliged to the slavish task of not quitting his castle more than two or three days, since he was my only jailor;

jailor; for he had not entrusted any one with the secret? Alas! I did not think that hatred, to satisfy its utmost malice, would impose a task upon itself, which even the most passionate lover would submit to with reluctance. With these reflections, I persuaded myself he had fixed a term to his vengeance; and possessed with this idea, every time he knocked at the wheel, I spoke to him; and although he did not answer me, I implored his compassion, and assured him of my innocence. As I was absolutely deprived of light, I could not tell how many months I preserved this hope; but at last I lost it. Then, reason entirely abandoning me, I accused Providence, I murmured against its eternal decrees. My soul, dejected, wounded by grief, lost its courage and principles, and I fell into the most dismal and gloomy despair. I dared to think, that the excess of my misfortunes gave me a right to dispose of my life; as if one could break the most sacred tie, because it ceases to be agreeable! —Determined to die, I was near two days without taking any nourishment, or fetching it from the wheel. The Duke in vain knocked and called me; I obstinately refused to answer him. At last he came into my prison: when he appeared, with his lantern in his hand, in spite of the horror his presence inspired me with, I felt an emotion of joy in again seeing light; but I did not speak to him. He offered to soften my captivity, to give me a light, books, and better food, if I would at last tell him the name so often demanded. At that proposal I fixed my eyes upon him with the greatest disdain. Now, said I to him, that you have broken all the fatal ties which united us, my heart is at liberty; it

owns without remorse those sentiments that in vain it formerly struggled with.—That object, whose name you only wish to know, to sacrifice him to your resentment, I love more than ever; my last sigh shall be for him: judge if I will now declare him!—Then all religion, replied the Duke, is extinguished in your soul: you nourish at the bottom of your heart an adulterous passion, and you renounce life.—Monster! interrupted I, am I still your wife? Dare you say it? You, who have plunged me in this abyss? You, who are even now in mourning for me? It is true, I have no longer courage to support life; but that God, who hears and judges us, will punish you alone for the despair you have reduced me to. In my situation, if I commit a crime, you only will be answerable. No living creature can hear my complaints and my cries! But what deep dungeon, what thick walls, can hide from the Almighty the groans of the weak unjustly oppressed? Tremble! He sees us; he excuses me, he is ready to pardon me, and his avenging arm is lifted over you!—At these words the Duke shuddered, and cast on me a look of distraction. I enjoyed for a moment the pleasure of striking with fear and remorse a soul equally weak and cruel. Pale, astonished, perplexed, with downcast eyes, for some moments he kept a sullen silence. Speaking at last,—Impute not to me, he said, but to yourself, the misfortunes you lament. You are criminal; I have undoubted proofs; you have not disowned it; and yet I did not punish you before I had offered you pardon a hundred times. I again propose to soften your punishment, and you refuse it! Notwithstanding

withstanding your infidelity, and your hatred for me, if you pleased, you should be still in my palace, you should again see your daughter.—O my daughter! interrupted I, alas! is she still alive? What is become of her?—She is with your mother.—Is it true that she is no longer in your hands?—Then the Duke, seeing that this idea revived me, took out of his pocket a letter from my mother, and permitted me to read it. That letter, which I bathed with my tears, contained the following words:

“ My grand-daughter arrived yesterday evening—Oh! how shall I describe all the sentiments that rent my heart in embracing her!—
 “ You have given her to me; she is mine. I feel that I already love her to excess: she can attach me to life, but not console me.—
 “ Alas! how can I, without feeling the most dreadful uneasiness, enjoy the happiness of being yet a mother? After the loss I have had, is there on earth a felicity I can rely on?
 “ I will come and see you next summer, and bring your daughter; we will spend two months with you. Since you cannot tear yourself from the melancholy habitation your grief has rendered so dear, I will have the resolution to come to you.—I shall see that superb monument your love has erected to the memory of an object so deserving of our sorrows!—Perhaps I shall there find an end to all my troubles!—Ah! then will it be possible that a mother, without dying, can embrace the tomb of her daughter?—Yet I will live—Religion commands me, and nature enjoins the same law. I will live for the
 “ child

" child you have deigned to trust to my care,
 " Oh ! how shall I ever acknowledge such an
 " obligation, such a sacrifice ! How dearly you
 " ought to love this child ! Alas ! she has all
 " her mother's features, she has all her charms ;
 " my daughter in her infancy is given me again !
 " —O too flattering illusion ! Unhappy mo-
 " ther ! thou hast no longer a daughter, and
 " the violence of thy grief cannot restore her to
 " life." —

Hardly had I finished this letter, when, fall-
 ing on my knees, O God ! cried I, my daughter
 is in the arms of my mother ! that tender mother
 consents to live for my child !—O God ! I will
 bless thee, thou hast afflicted me only ! Content-
 ed, I will now submit to my fate ! Pardon my
 distracted complaints ; give happiness to all those
 I love ; my painful existence prolong at thy
 pleasure !—In ending these words, I fell back
 on my straw, for I was so weak I could not sup-
 port myself. The Duke seized that moment to
 offer me some food, which I took directly. He
 then left me, and from that time I never saw
 him. Yet, faithful to the vow I had made, I
 took care of my life. The idea, that my pray-
 ers and resignation would draw on my mother
 and daughter all the blessings of Heaven, con-
 soled, revived, and supported my courage. The
 recollection of my faults became my greatest
 affliction.—Alas ! all my misfortunes proceed
 from myself ! I wanted confidence in my mo-
 ther ; in ceasing to consult her, I was led astray.
 Ungrateful and guilty daughter ! Heaven, to
 punish me, blinded my parents in their choice :
 the husband they gave me, could not make me
 happy.

happy. Yet, without new faults, the sentiments I derived from nature might in time have rendered me happy ; but, far from trying to overcome a criminal passion, I secretly nourished it. I even dared, in the imprudent letters which have been my ruin, to describe all its violence, and to complain at the same time of a husband I abused !—These reflections made me shed torrents of tears. Nevertheless I felt a soft melancholy pleasure in weeping for my faults ; I delighted in a lively sensation of them ; to lament over them, is to expiate them. Remorse for a crime wounds the soul ; but repentance for an involuntary weakness has nothing cutting or bitter in it. This virtuous sentiment consoles us for our faults, and reconciles us to ourselves. Every bond of society being thus broken, and being cut off from the world, my heart, formed for love, soon gave itself up to that sublime passion, which alone could render my life supportable. Religion made me know and taste all the inexhaustible consolations that she is able to give : insensibly she banished from my heart that unhappy attachment, which was my greatest misfortune ; she gave me at length what human wisdom and mere philosophy could not procure ; courage to support, without despair or murmuring, nine years of captivity in a dungeon impenetrable to the sun !—I will confess, however, that I suffered, in the two or three first years, sorrows, the bare remembrance of which now makes me shudder. The time when I supposed (according to such a calculation as I had been able to make) that my mother and child were to be in the same castle where I was prisoner ; this time passed with me in the most dismal manner,
and

and was the most cruel part of my captivity : my heart was rent in pieces with thinking that my mother and daughter were so near me, without the possibility of entertaining a hope of ever seeing them again.—O my mother ! cried I, you mourn my death, and I exist ! And what hand, great God ! have you chosen to wipe away your tears ? It is in the bosom of my persecutor, my executioner, that you shed them !—Ah ! it is not my tomb that he carries you to—Alas ! you tread me under your feet without knowing it : you will with dry eyes look on these rocks that cover me ! Perhaps, in the silence of the night, not being able to taste the sweets of sleep, you will wander around my cavern ! Perhaps, at this very instant, you are sitting by that horrid trap-door, which will never again be opened for me ! Ah ! if it is so, you think without doubt of your unhappy daughter ; you weep for her ; and cannot hear her cries or her voice, which calls you !—These dreadful ideas pierced my soul, and often disturbed my reason. To these cruel fits of grief succeeded a kind of stupid insensibility, more frightful than even despair itself : but in proportion as piety strengthened my heart, these violent transports diminished ; I found in prayer inexpressible consolation. All the meditations, which commonly afflict men, were to me the most agreeable contemplations. With what pleasure did I reflect on the shortness of life ! I looked forwards to death with the greatest serenity.—Is the happiest being, said I to myself, ever fully satisfied with the weak and frail pleasures this world affords ? His mind is less occupied with present than future blessings. In this
deceitful

deceitful felicity, his imagination delights to wander into futurity : but what avails it, whether his fate be happy or miserable ? what signifies the completion or destruction of his hopes ? will he not be for ever forming new desires ? can he enjoy the present, can he be contented with it ? Why then do I so severely regret the good fortune I am deprived of, since it cannot procure happiness ? I am, it is true, to pass my life in this horrible darkness ; the future offers nothing to my depressed imagination but a long and sorrowful night.—Well, let us think only of the awaking ! Let us forget this perishable life ; let us fix our eyes on eternity ; let us despise a momentary grief, which will be succeeded by an immortal felicity ; let us bring all our desires, all our hopes, towards the only object worthy of fixing and possessing the human heart ! —It was thus, by these salutary reflections, I rose superior to my fate, and at last attained an entire resignation. Restored to reason, to myself, my sorrows were not only assuaged, but I became accustomed to darkness and to my captivity. I formed for myself employments ; my prison was spacious ; I walked a great part of the day (or night) ; I made verses, which I repeated aloud. I had a good voice, and was perfect mistress of music ; I composed a sort of hymns, and one of my greatest pleasures was to sing them, and listen to the echo which answered me. My sleep became peaceful ; agreeable dreams represented my father, mother, and daughter : I always saw those dear objects satisfied and happy. Sometimes I found myself transported into fine palaces, or charming gardens. I saw again the
 heavens,

heavens, trees, flowers. In short, these sweet illusions restored me all the happiness I had lost. I awaked sighing, it is true; but I slept with pleasure. Even waking, joy ceased to be a stranger to my heart; my imagination was exalted. Under the eyes of the Supreme Being, I dared to flatter myself, that my patience and resignation did not present an unworthy object to his view. Witness of all my actions, he heard me, he spoke to my heart, he re-animated it, he raised it up to himself, and I did not feel alone in my cavern. After being deprived of the objects I loved, the only thing I regretted, still, in spite of myself, was the light, and the sight of the heavens. I could not comprehend how any one could give himself up to despair in the most dismal slavery, if he enjoyed a window that had a prospect of the country. At last I was so used to my situation, that, far from desiring death, I found more than once that I still feared it.—Often I wanted nourishment: the Duke sometimes brought what he thought would be sufficient for three or four days. I imagined he was then compelled to go a short journey; and when my provision was nearly exhausted, I felt much uneasiness. The death of my tyrant would cause mine: and that cruel thought obliged me to pray for his health. In reality I had no longer an aversion for him: religion had made me easily renounce hatred. Could this weak effort be painful to me? Had I not already triumphed over my love?—I pitied my persecutor; I represented to myself the horrid state of his soul, his passions, his fears, his remorse; and I found myself but too well revenged. In the beginning of my captivity,

vity, I never heard him come without being ready to faint with terror. By degrees these violent agitations grew weaker. He always inspired me with a kind of emotion mixed with some fear; yet I wished him to come, not only for the preservation of my life, but because he interrupted the frightful and profound silence of my solitude. He made me hear a noise, and something move; in fine, he procured me a kind of variety, which was never agreeable, but became necessary.

—I cannot explain to you how very lively and singular my desire was to hear some sound. When it thundered violently, I heard it; to express what I then felt is impossible: I did not think myself in total solitude; I listened to that awful sound with as much joy as attention; and when it ceased entirely, I fell into the deepest melancholy. Such was nearly my situation for six or seven years. During that time I was only really concerned for my absolute ignorance relative to the fate of my mother and daughter: in vain I questioned the Duke, whenever he knocked at the wheel; I could not obtain a single word in answer; for since his last appearance in my prison, he had never spoke to me.

All my courage was necessary to support that cruel uncertainty on so interesting a subject.—

Often, when I invoked Heaven for my child, for my mother, all at once my heart was oppressed, my tears flowed. Alas! cried I, do they still live? I pray for their happiness, and perhaps I have the dreadful misfortune to survive them!—

In other moments, hope was so strongly imprinted on my heart, that I did not feel even the slightest uneasiness on that account. In that

happy

happy disposition of mind, I flattered myself that it was not impossible an extraordinary event might snatch me from my prison. That idea was so fixed in my heart, especially during the last year of my captivity, that I made a vow to God, if ever I recovered my liberty, to consecrate my life to him in retirement far from Rome, and there to spend the remainder of my days, as soon as my daughter should have no occasion for my care. I am now come to the most interesting period of my life. I approach the moment of my deliverance; and soon the Divine goodness was going to recompence me amply for nine years of misery and grief. The Duke for some time, I imagined, constantly inhabited the castle, because he regularly brought my food: but one day he failed coming at the time; I waited impatiently for him; he did not come, and I had entirely finished my little provision. I slept peaceably enough. The next day I waited in vain for the relief, which every moment made more necessary for me. The time passed; uneasiness, as much as hunger and thirst, deprived me of sleep; and I remained in that situation near another day. Then, absolutely exhausted, I thought the end of my life was approaching. I considered death with tranquillity; yet the remembrance of all that was dear to me occurred to grieve and affect me.—Unhappy daughter and mother, cried I, must I pass my last moments in this fatal solitude! Dear authors of my life, must I then die without receiving your blessings! O my daughter! I cannot give thee mine; I shall not enjoy the indulgence of dying in thy arms!—My daughter!

ter! thou canst not even regret me!—In that moment, when thy unhappy mother is expiring, thou art enjoying, without doubt, amusements and pleasures suitable to thy age!—Dreadful thought! I die; and all those I love have long been consoled for my death!—But what do I say? Unreasonable that I am, I complain, I murmur, when all my misfortunes are going to end!—Great God! forgive me this criminal weakness—My heart rejects and disowns it. O my Judge and my Father! deign to call me at last to thyself!—Full of hope and confidence, sure of enjoying eternal happiness, I expect death with security; I should even call it to my aid, if thou didst not forbid me to desire it!—In ending these words, I fell back almost lifeless on the straw, which served me by way of bed.—I felt in my heart a serenity, a tranquillity, the charms of which I had never tasted till that moment. A salutary balm appeared suddenly to heal all the wounds of my heart. My ideas were soon confounded with the excess of my weakness. I gently fell into a wandering and delicious reverie, a sort of sleep, during which the most delightful forms successively offered themselves to my imagination. I thought I saw my bed surrounded with bright angels of light, and celestial figures: I heard at a distance harmonious voices, divine concerts: I saw heaven half opened, the Almighty, on a shining throne, calling me, and stretching out his arms to me.—In reality he was then watching me; his paternal hand was going to break my chains—All at once I awake in a palpitation; I think I hear a knocking at the wheel; I listen—they knock

knock again—my heart beats—But, O surprize !
O unheard-of transport !—transport impossible
to be described !—I hear a voice, and that voice
is no longer my tyrant's ; it is a new voice—It
founded to me like that of an angel descended
from Heaven to deliver me.—Distracted, amazed,
I clasped my hands with the most passionate emo-
tion, and the most lively gratitude. O God !
cried I, it is a deliverer that thou sendest me !—
Ah ! I accepted death with joy ; and thou givest
me life !—Life is one of thy blessings ; I am
permitted to cherish it !—In saying these words,
I endeavoured to get up to go near the wheel ; I
am not able, my strength fails me, and I fall
back upon my bed.—At this moment my door
opens, and I perceived a light. Somebody en-
ters ; I try to rise ; I wish to see, but can distin-
guish nothing ; my eyes, so long deprived of
light, cannot bear the faint glimmer of a lamp,
and close themselves in spite of me Never-
theless some one approaches Oh ! who are
you ? cried I, with a faltering voice. With
these words, I again attempt to open my still
dazzled eyes. I saw a man on his knees before
me ; he put his arm under my head, which he
supported, and presented me with some food,
which at that moment was the only thing I
could attend to ; famished as I was, every other
idea seemed suspended, and I seized with eager-
ness the nourishment which was offered me. At
last, feeling my strength revive, I turned all at once
towards my deliverer. His face was in the shade ;
I could not distinguish his features.—O speak to
me, said I ; are you the accomplice of my per-
secutor, or do you come to deliver me ? ———O
Heaven !

Heaven! interrupted the unknown, what voice is that, Where am I? O God!—In concluding these words he hastily rose, and taking the light, he returned to me; he looked at me with an attention mixed with tenderness and horror. I fixed for a moment my eyes on his face, enlightened by the lamp. His hair seemed to stand an end; he was pale and trembling—but I could not mistake him. I wished to speak; my tears stopped my utterance; I was only able to pronounce the name of the Count *de Belmire*—It was really him—he fell at my feet; he bathed them with his tears; he still looked at me; he stammered out some confused words; he accused and blessed Heaven; the violence of his compassion gave to his joy the appearance of madness and despair. We both spoke at the same time, without hearing or answering each other.—The cavern re echoed with our cries. At length the Count, getting up with an air of dignity, O most barbarous of men! cried he, execrable monster! is there a torture sufficient to punish thee for thy crimes? And you, continued he, assisting me to rise, you, unfortunate victim of the fury of a relentless tyger, come; you are free.—At these words, my first motion was to rush towards the door; but stopping myself directly, Oh! said I to the Count, you are my deliverer; I owe to you my life, my liberty! But these benefits which you have restored me, can they now give me happiness? Alas! I dare not interrogate you. My mother, my father? — They live. — Heaven! And my daughter?—She is at Rome; she will be soon in your arms. — O God! cried I, prostrating myself, what gratitude can ever
acquit

acquit my obligations towards thee ! This single moment has already paid me for all my sufferings !—O you, my generous protector ! pursued I, addressing myself to the Count, now, for your recompence, learn that I am innocent : but before I tell you the melancholy circumstances of my history, allow me to ask you one question—Doubtless the Duke is ill ?—Attacked with a dangerous disease, he is on the brink of the grave, and cannot live more than two days.—Come, quit this horrible dungeon, that the monster, before he expires, may know you are at liberty.—No, interrupted I, it is my father, my mother, who must take me out of my prison ; it is only guided by them that I can go out.—I then intreated the Count to send an express immediately to my father. He promised me ; and giving me a pencil and a piece of paper, I wrote without delay a note, which contained these words : “ O my father ! my mother ! “ I am alive, I am innocent !—Come, by your “ presence restore me doubly to life !—Come, “ and take me out of a horrid dungeon, and make “ me forget all the misfortunes I have endured.” —This note was scarce legible : I was near a quarter of an hour writing it ; for I did not know how to form a letter, and spelling I had totally forgot.—The Count seeing I was irrevocably determined to stay in my prison till the arrival of my mother, gave me the keys of all the doors, and left me with an inexpressible regret, after having promised me to dissemble with the Duke, if he should still live, and to come again the next day, as soon as the dusk of the evening should come on. When I found myself alone,
I was

I was seized with a terror almost as violent as that I experienced in the beginning of my confinement. Yet I had light; the Count had left me a lamp and a dark lantern. I had also asked him for a watch, that I might count all the hours; for I did not expect it was possible for me to sleep a moment. Immovably fixed at the place where the Count *de Belmière* left me, with difficulty I breathed; I dared not lift up my eyes, and yet I could not help by stealth casting a look around me. The light, far from encouraging me, added to my fears, because it made me distinguish my melancholy and sad habitation. At last, not being able to bear myself, I got up, I took my light, I opened my first door, I went out; I came into a kind of long gallery, on the side of the cavern where the wheel was placed. I already felt a great relief in seeing myself in a new place; it brought me to the last door of my prison. I quickened my steps to the end of the gallery; I opened the door of entrance. Then I found myself at the bottom of the stair-case of the cavern; and being no more shut in than by the double doors that led to the garden, I shut those of the gallery, to separate myself from my horrid dungeon. Then, going up the stair-case with rapidity, I seated myself on the upper step, and I then began to breathe. After such an event, so happy, so unexpected, it might seem I should have felt the most lively and pure joy. But I had suffered too long, I had been too unhappy, for my heart to dare to give itself up to the seducing charms of the sweetest hopes. I thought, it is true, with transport, that all I loved existed. Nevertheless, when I considered

the inexpressible delight I should feel in finding myself again in the arms of my mother, in embracing my father and my child, I could not flatter myself that so great a felicity could ever be my lot ! A thousand destructive ideas arose to trouble and blacken my imagination ; and in that dejected and melancholy state, all my most chimerical fears I looked upon as predictions. That interesting period of my life, the day when the Count *de Belmire* entered my prison, was the 3d of June 17—. He left me at midnight ; and till six in the morning I remained in the situation I have just described, when all at once I thought I heard a gentle noise : I listened with the greatest attention at the door of my prison : and in spite of its thickness, and that of the rock which covered it, I heard distinctly enough the chirping of the birds, waked by the appearance of day. The impulse of joy which I felt at that instant, is not to be described or conceived. All my melancholy vanished, my heart was again opened to hope and happiness. The sweetest tears flowed from my eyes, although my ideas were still extremely confused, and though I was not in a condition to reflect on the unexpected change of my situation ; for I was entirely engrossed with the desire of hearing what passed in the garden. My ear fixed to the door, holding my breath, I listened with an attention which no other thought could divert me from. I heard the dogs barking, men walking, and even talking confusedly ; and all these different noises gave me inexpressible pleasure. Yet, towards the end of the day, I eagerly wished for night, that I might again see the Count *de Belmire*, and
question

question him upon a thousand things I ardently desired to be informed of, and which presented themselves successively to my imagination, as my ideas got into order. For instance, I wished to know how long I had been confined in my prison; before I had seen the Count, I thought I had been near fifty years. The youthful appearance of the Count *de Belmire* proved to me, that grief and sorrow are bad calculators of time: I did not even know, within four or five years, what was my age. The Count came exactly at midnight. I easily perceived by his pale countenance, how deeply he was affected with sorrow and compassion at the event which had changed my doom. Through respect for my situation, which obliged me to receive him alone, in the middle of the night; through respect for the fatal knot, ready to be broken, but which was still binding to me, he never mentioned either the sentiments which I had dared to acknowledge in happier times, nor those he still preserved towards me. After he had told me that he had written to my father when he sent my note, and that the Duke was at the point of death, I begged him to tell me the reasons which had made the Duke confide in him so important a secret.—The Count satisfied my curiosity in the following words:

“ I had been a year on my travels, when I
 “ heard the news of your death. At the same
 “ time I learnt the Duke was inconsolable for
 “ your loss: that circumstance greatly weakened
 “ the natural antipathy I had for him.—I tra-
 “ velled two years more; recalled by my affairs,
 “ I returned into Italy. Obligated to see the Duke,
 “ it was necessary I should come to this castle; for

“ he very seldom left it, and now and then only
“ went to Naples to spend two or three days. I
“ here saw your tomb; I saw your picture, placed
“ in almost all the apartments. I attached my-
“ self to the habitation, and even to the inhu-
“ man monster who had made you his victim.
“ He discovered such a violent grief, so deep a
“ melancholy, that I soon preferred his society to
“ all others. I came every year, and spent five
“ or six months in this castle. A year ago, the
“ Duke was seized with a dangerous disorder;
“ ignorant of his state of health, he still made
“ little excursions to Naples. Last winter he
“ left off entirely going to court, and wrote to
“ me at Rome, desiring me to come and see
“ him. I arrived about the end of January,
“ and found him very ill, though he did not keep
“ his bed, and always walked about. I even
“ thought that I perceived at times he was not
“ entirely in his senses. Consumed by remorse,
“ his life for nine years has been an insupport-
“ able burthen to him; and yet he could not
“ look on the end of it without horror. At
“ last his weakness increased every day; he fell
“ all at once into convulsions, so that he was
“ obliged to be put to bed. He remained there
“ three days, when one of his valets-de-chambre
“ came to tell me, at nine o'clock at night,
“ that he wanted to speak to me. The man
“ added that the Duke, that night and the pre-
“ ceding one, had sent his servants away, in order
“ to endeavour to get up by himself; but not
“ being able to support himself, he had rung for
“ them; and that they had found him out of
“ his bed, and half dressed. I went directly to
“ his

“ his room ; he sent away his physician and his
 “ people ; and telling me he was going to trust
 “ me with an important secret, he made me
 “ swear to keep it faithfully. Then, looking at
 “ me with a wild air,—Family reasons, said he,
 “ oblige me to keep prisoner in this castle a
 “ guilty woman, and one who deserved death—
 “ She must want food ; go, carry her some.
 “ Knock at the wheel, which serves for that
 “ purpose ; if she does not answer you, go into
 “ her prison and succour her : but I give you
 “ warning that the woman is mad ; do not list-
 “ ten to her ; give her some nourishment ; return
 “ again immediately. I promise you one day to
 “ tell you her history and her name. The Duke
 “ then taught me the secret of his caverns ; and
 “ taking from under his pillow a parcel of keys,
 “ he gave them to me, desiring I would execute
 “ his commission without delay.—The barba-
 “ rian, supposing I had never seen you, thought
 “ he could not place his confidence better ; and
 “ delivered into my hands your fate and mine.”

When the Count *de Belmire* had finished this
 recital, he intreated me to tell him my history.
 But as I could not relate it without speaking of
 the sentiments which I had had for him, I de-
 clared I would not tell him, but in the presence
 of my father and mother. The Count *de Bel-
 mire* had calculated that my father must arrive,
 at the latest, in less than two days. Less agi-
 tated, and more in a condition to reflect, I tasted,
 during twenty-four hours, all the happiness so
 dear an expectation could procure me. My im-
 patience augmenting as the hour of my deli-
 verance approached, it soon knew no bounds,

and became an insupportable torment. I had never felt any thing I can compare to the violent agitations I experienced the night that preceded the happiest day of my life. My eyes fixed attentively on my watch, I mournfully considered the slow motion of the hands. Every instant I thought—I heard a noise; I shuddered; I felt my blood boiling in my veins; and all my arteries beat with violence. These lively emotions still increased, when the singing of the birds announced the dawn of day, the fortunate day, when I was to be born again, and take the dear and sacred title and rights of daughter and mother!—That moment made to compensate an age of misery! that moment so passionately desired!—it approached!—it came at last!—Cries redoubled, tumultuous voices were heard—Soon I distinguish a confused noise of carriages, of horses, of armed men—The noise increases, it draws near.—I tremble, I shiver—O God!—what voice strikes my ears, and re-echoes at the bottom of my soul!—O my mother!—she calls her daughter!—my heart rushes towards her!—Good God, who gavest me strength to support my misfortunes, O do not let excess of joy overcome me!—I feel that I am fainting—Must I expire at the feet of my mother!—As I ended these words, my door opened; I precipitately rushed out of my cavern. In spite of the bright glare of day which strikes and hurts my dazzled eyes, I see, I again recollect my mother, my father; I gave a piercing shriek; I throw myself into their arms, and there fall down in a fit.—O! who can describe the joy, the transports, I felt when I recovered my senses!

—I

—I found myself on the bosom of the tenderest of mothers, my face bathed with her tears. My father on his knees before me, pressing both my hands in his. —I again saw the day, and the sun! —and I was certain of soon seeing my daughter— That instant realized all my dearest hopes, and satisfied every wish of my heart. I can give no account of my thoughts in these first moments; I felt too much to be able to think, or to express the violence of my joy, otherwise than by my sobs and my tears. At last my father, raising me in his arms, Come, my dear child, said he, quit this dreadful abode, where vice has so long oppressed innocence—Come.—At these words I arose; I looked around me, and I saw we were surrounded with a numerous company of armed men, among whom I recollected a great many relations, and some friends of my father's, who told me he had assembled them before he left Rome, he had conducted them directly to Naples, where, throwing himself at the feet of the King, and shewing him my note, he not only obtained permission to come and take me by force, if force was necessary, but even troops to second him. When I arrived here, continued my father, I learnt that your infamous persecutor had just expired. Thus this happy day restores all that love you, delivers you from an execrable tyrant, and secures to you perfect liberty. All the answer I gave to this discourse, was embracing my father with tears. At the height of happiness, having nothing to fear, I could not help pitying, at the bottom of my soul, the fate of the unhappy Duke *de C*——. Alas! said I to myself, if I had loved him, he

would not have polluted his life by such criminal passions; he would now be alive and happy!—That thought, whilst it excited my compassion, made it painful and melancholy: and during some moments impressed my heart with a cruel sorrow, and corrupted all my joy. At last we set out; and the next day, fortunate as a mother as I had been happy as a daughter, I found again that child so passionately beloved; I clasped her in my arms; I saw her shed tears; I heard her call me her mother!—I was in a kind of delirium the two first days of my arrival at Rome, stunned with noise, astonished at every thing, and enjoying nothing thoroughly but the happiness of seeing my daughter again, and finding myself between my father and mother. Then, my heart being fully satisfied, I began to feel the value of all the happiness that had been restored to me. I found enjoyments, as agreeable as new, in the most common things of life; all were sights for me. The first time I walked by moon-light, I felt an admiration, an extacy of joy, not to be expressed, in beholding again that clear and soft light, and the heavens spangled with stars. I could not walk in the country, or in a garden, without stopping at every step to examine particularly all the objects that came in my sight. I contemplated the flowers, the fruits, the trees, the grass, the clouds, the rising and the setting sun, that delightful and sublime sight! O God! exclaimed I to myself, what wonders does thy goodness create for our use, what treasures does it lavish upon us! and ungrateful man is capable of disdaining them; and when he enjoys so many blessings, can think himself

himself unhappy!—It was thus my heart gave itself up with transport to the felicity which it had been so long robbed of. I also felt an extreme pleasure in finding myself again in the palace where I was born, and where the happy years of my infancy and early youth were spent; but I own I could not see the Marchioness of *Venuzi*, that old friend, again, without feeling some pain: she was the first cause of all my misfortunes. The Count *de Belmire* soon followed me to Rome; and in the presence of my father, my mother, the Marchioness *de Venuzi*, and some relations, I told him my history. Scarcely had I finished when, throwing himself at my feet, he expressed in the most passionate terms the excess of his compassion and gratitude. What! cried he, you could, by naming me, have prevented that horrible doom! It was I who plunged you in that abyss; and whilst you groaned there, I lived; I saw light, which you were deprived of for me!—May I be permitted to flatter myself, that love can recompense you for all the terrible calamities it has caused you?—That heart, so noble and so tender, can it be faithless! Have your misfortunes made you abjure those sentiments, without which I am unable to live? My father at this discourse affectionately embraced the Count *de Belmire*, and by that action made me know he approved his sentiments. But for me, having almost lost the very idea of a passion which formerly had such an ascendancy over my heart, I could no longer even conceive how any one could devote himself to it; and still less the possibility that I could be the object. After a moment's silence, I spoke; and, address-

sing the Count, I described to him so naturally the situation of my heart, that he instantly lost all his hopes. He left Rome for some time; but the sentiment which made him fly brought him back again; and consoled by the friendship I shewed him, he fixed himself there entirely.

For my part, far from losing my relish for the good fortune which I tasted, every day seemed to make me more sensible of its value. How delightful were my first thoughts every time I awoke!—In casting my eyes around me I felt the purest joy, in seeing my daughter's bed by the side of mine, in finding myself again in my paternal dwelling! I could not comprehend, how I had been able to support myself without that felicity I now enjoyed, or even without those comforts and conveniences which use began now to make me think absolutely necessary to life. These ideas inspired me with the tenderest compassion for all the unfortunate. I had lain upon straw for nine years; I had suffered hunger, thirst, and cold—I owed at least to my misfortunes the sentiment, which brings us the nearest to the divinity!—I did not listen with inattention to the lamentations of the poor imploring my compassion. Their fate made me recall mine; I conceived them as of the same species with myself; and I found the most delightful satisfaction in consoling and relieving them! To receive, to entertain them, was not sufficient for me; I went to seek them.—Ah! who deserves to have the first advances made to him, if it is not the wretch that is in pain, and who often dares not ask for the feeble succours which would save his life?—This desire to find
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the unfortunate, in order to change their condition, was no virtue in me; it was the most pressing exigence of my heart, and the sweetest of all my pleasures. But the more I grew accustomed to the ease which was restored to me, the stronger impression did the remembrance of my captivity make upon me; and soon it was not in my power to talk of my misfortunes, nor even to listen with tranquillity to the recitals or discourses, which could recall them to my memory. That weakness gave me a great many more. I could not bear darkness, or total solitude, were it only for a moment. I remember, that one night my light went out. I opened my eyes, and finding myself in a profound darkness, I felt an horror that my reason could not conquer or moderate. I gave a piercing cry: they came, and found me pale, disfigured, almost without my senses, and agitated with the most frightful convulsions. These vain terrors, these involuntary weaknesses, melancholy fruits of my misfortunes and captivity, were not my greatest afflictions. I found myself absolutely incapable of directing the education of my daughter. I was forced to learn again to read, write, and cast accounts; but by a singularity remarkable enough, I had hardly forgot any thing I had read in my youth; for having had, during nine years, no kind of amusement to engage my attention, I had looked for one in the past, by recalling frequently and circumstantially what I had learnt from books and conversation. Thus all those things were imprinted in my memory, perhaps better than if I had never quitted the world. I was twenty-

seven years old when I came out of my confinement, and my daughter was then ten. Entirely occupied with her, living in the most secluded retirement, always shut up in my apartment, seeing only my father, my mother, and sometimes the Count *de Belmire*, I lived thus for five years. My daughter at last attained her fifteenth year; and being the greatest match in Italy, all the families of distinction at Rome made proposals to me. My choice had long been made at the bottom of my heart. I consulted my daughter; she acknowledged her sentiments coincided with my wishes; my father and mother gave their approbation. I did not delay executing my intention. The Count *de Belmire*, still young, a captivating figure, virtuous as amiable, possessor of a considerable fortune, had constantly refused the most advantageous and splendid establishments. It was to that too faithful lover, that dearest friend, my deliverer, to whom I offered my daughter. I give her to you, said I to him; she is yours. She loves you; she is fifteen, the age I was the first time you saw me; she will recall all that I was then, both by her figure and her sentiments. Fate gives you back to-day, what it formerly deprived you of. As I was not born to make you happy, nothing but seeing you happy with my daughter can give me consolation. At these words the Count *de Belmire* seized one of my hands, bathing it with tears; and as I was pressing him to answer me: Ah! said he, at last, have you not a right to dispose of my destiny!—The same evening this conversation passed, the marriage articles were signed; and eight days after

after the Count *de Belmire* married my daughter. I remained at Rome another year. Then seeing my daughter settled and perfectly happy, I now only thought of retiring into solitude, and performing the vow I had made in my prison. Besides, the air of Rome being very prejudicial to my health, the physicians had ordered me to go to Nice for some time. I undertook that voyage by La Corniche. I was so much charmed with the situation of Albenga, that I resolved to fix myself in that agreeable place. I had a plain and commodious house built, in which I took up my abode, when I returned from Nice. It is here, for four years, I have recovered perfect health, and my life glides away in the most delightful repose. It is here, that I have had the resolution to write this history, which I design for my grandchildren, when they are of an age to reap advantage from it. In abandoning the world I have not renounced those objects that were dear to me. Since I have been at Albenga, I have already made two journies to Rome to see my father and mother; and every year my daughter and my son-in-law come and spend three months in my retirement. In short, it is impossible to be more perfectly happy than I am. I bless God every day for the happiness I possess, and even for the misfortunes I have suffered, since they have expiated my faults, purified my heart, and have taught me the full value of the felicity which I now enjoy.

Continuation

Continuation of the Journal of the Baronefs.

Pietra, Sunday.

WHEN you have read the story of the Duchefs de C——, you will easily conceive the pain we felt in quitting Albenga; we could not prevail upon ourselves to leave it till this afternoon. We were obliged to perform a good part of the journey on foot, and our conversation turned perpetually on the beautiful and affecting Duchefs; we observed that all her misfortunes arose solely from her want of confidence in her mother; and that without the aid of religion her cavern had been her grave, or would have rendered her stupid and senseless. So that *Adelaide* and *Theodore* have now a more enlarged idea of religion; they have seen it at Lagaraye, great, beneficent, heroic; they have just now seen, that there are no accidents in life, no misfortunes, which it cannot enable us to support with courage and resignation; they will never forget, that it is as comfortable as sublime; that it imprints on the heart virtues, which by nature we have not; and that it inspires us with a courage, that unassisted reason cannot pretend to.

Savona, Monday.

To avoid an horrible and dangerous mountain, we embarked this morning at Pietra, and went three leagues and an half by sea to Novi, where we again took to our chairs. From the
top

top of the mountain, which overlooks the towns of Anvaye and Savona, is the finest view in the universe! this is all we have found remarkable since our leaving Albenga. Savona is a pretty town, agreeably situated, and but twelve leagues from Genoa. We have already ran over it and its environs. After having finished our journey by *La Corniche*, we found great pleasure in getting into our carriages once more, and in seeing horses again. We are just returned from visiting Abbissola, a village one short league from Genoa, in which are the two magnificent palaces of Novere and Durazzo.—The gardens are extensive, but in a bad taste. I observed, which is singular enough, that none of the charming flowers which grow spontaneously in the fields, except the orange-tree, are admitted there; whilst the box is cultivated with the greatest care; and the superb vases, which ornament the terraces, are filled with it. *Adelaide* testified her surprize at it, and said, the master of this palace seems to have very little taste.—It is certainly, replied I, a very frivolous vanity, if he takes any notice of his garden himself, and does not abandon the care of it entirely to his gardener: for this nasty box is placed in these beautiful vases for no other reason, than that it is *here* more scarce than myrtle, jessamin, and the rose-laurel.—But, mamma, does an agreeable thing become less so for being common?—No, surely! not in the opinion of persons of sense and taste: but a rich man, with much vanity and little understanding, thinks of nothing but displaying his wealth. He lavishes his money, not to procure what he likes best, but what makes most show;

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not to conciliate the esteem of persons of worth, but to raise the admiration and envy of fools; and sacrificing to that absurd vanity the most rational pleasures, he has no enjoyments of his own; and thinking to dazzle all eyes by his magnificence, he only shews his folly and absurdity.

L E T T E R XXXIX.

The same to the same.

Genoa.

WE arrived at Genoa, my dear friend, in the morning of the day before yesterday. As I this day met with a safe conveyance for my little journal of *La Corniche*, and the history of the *Duchess de C* —, I made use of it to send them to you. And now I am going to make a *real journal*, which you will not see till my return; I shall write it with care, because it is to serve as a model: for my daughter is to write one, and I to write another; and every night she is to communicate *her* observations, which I shall correct by mine;—as we shall both write on the same subject, and as I shall not shew her my journal till I have seen hers, this method will serve to form her style, her judgment, and her mind at the same time. But, however, that my letters may appear less insipid to you, I shall enliven them from time to time with some particulars

particulars relative to the manners and customs of the countries we pass through;—for instance, I can inform you already, that what they say of Ciciſbeo's *, is literally true;—it is absolutely necessary for a lady to have one after the first year; he is the choice of the parents and the husband, so that you may easily guess, whether she always keeps to him alone. His business is to attend upon his Ciciſbea every where; to be of her party at cards; to walk by her chair; to open and shut it for her; to carry her cloak, her fan, &c.

Except the new street, and that of Balbi, which are broad, all the rest are very narrow; so that there are scarce any carriages kept at Genoa, and every body uses chairs. All the women of inferior rank appear to be pretty; they wear a sort of English dress, with long trains that sweep the streets, long muslin aprons, and a mantle of Persian, which they wrap round their heads in such a manner, that one seldom discovers the whole face at once, but the different features one after another; sometimes the mouth, sometimes the eyes, and sometimes the nose; and this manner of exposing themselves, as it were by retail, and discovering whilst they conceal themselves, becomes them, and appears very alluring.

Yesterday we were at a grand assembly, which they call *Vigilia delle quarante*; because forty noble Genoese ladies give these assemblies by turns. *Adelaide*, who thought the ladies not dressed in

* The word Ciciſbeo is Greek, and signifies, they say, whispering in the ear.

tasse, gave Miss *Bridget* a description of them droll enough, but satirical. On hearing this, I turned coldly to Miss *Bridget*, and shrugging up my shoulders, surely Miss, says I, you must have had a better opinion of the sense and character of *Adelaide*.—Really, Madam, *I am surprized at it*.—How do you mean, Mamma?—I did not think, *Adelaide*, you would have so soon forgot what I said to you on this subject, when you criticised the ladies of Languedoc.—But, Mamma, the Genoese ladies are a thousand times more ridiculous. It is impossible not to be astonished at their head-dresses, so flat, so frizzed, so powdered, and their enormous hoops!—Your astonishment is very absurd, and you would have greater reason for it, were the Genoese ladies dressed exactly in the same mode as those of Paris and Versailles: for it would indeed be very surprising, if in such frivolous matters there should be a general agreement, and one exact model for all countries After this short lesson I changed the discourse. This morning *Adelaide* and I went a shopping, and as we speak good Italian, we were advised not to pass ourselves for foreigners, that we might get better bargains. So we went out in the morning dresses of the Genoese ladies. As we were coming from a shop where they sold artificial flowers, and were getting into our chairs, my Genoese footman proposed to us to go to a print-shop just by. I at first made some difficulties; but yielding to the solicitations of *Adelaide*, I went in. The master of the shop, a fat, good-humoured man, shewed us some prints, and asked, with a laugh, if we had seen *La Bambolina Francese*—*The French Puppet*.

Puppet. What is that, says *Adelaide*? It is a coloured drawing, which a young painter made last night at *The Vigilia delle quarante*.—And what does it represent?—You must know first of all, Ladies, there are two French women come to Genoa, mother and daughter.—Here *Adelaide* and I looked upon one another with some emotion; and the man pursued his discourse: The mother, continued he, has nothing extraordinary; but the little girl is a fine caricature indeed!—Here, *Lawrence*! where are those little drawings?—*Lawrence* answered, they are all sold except this, which he brought. The painter has not lost his labour then, says the master. He passed the whole night, with two or three of his friends, in making a score or two of them, and they are all gone but this. Here—observe, Ladies, how very comical!—*Adelaide* blushing, and very much confused, cast her eyes upon it, and immediately turned her head away with a forced and disconcerted smile.—You will agree with me, that it is an excellent figure!—Observe this mass of hair floating all over the shoulders, these enormous curls falling down and covering the neck and breast, and this basket of flowers upon the head. Oh! what an excellent caricature! what an excellent caricature!—And did the painter, says I to him, tell you that it was like.—Oh! he did not much attend to the likeness; and yet two ladies of the *Vigilia delle quarante*, who were here this morning, knew it instantly, and laughed heartily.—Do they say this young French woman is pretty?—The painter says, she would be very well, were she not trussed up in so extraordinary a manner.

manner. . . . As he finished these words, I arose, purchased the *little French puppet*, and went out. At our return home, Well, my dear *Adelaide*, said I, what think you of this adventure?—Why, Mamma, I see that when we ridicule others for trifles, it may be retorted upon us. I was very foolish, I own; but the ladies of the *Vigilia delle quarante* were as silly as I; for they likewise laughed at my dress, and they are older than me.—And for that very reason you may be assured, that many of them had sense enough not to be surprized that a French woman was not dressed like a Genoese.—Mamma, now you have bought this wretched little drawing, what do you design to do with it?—Whatever you please—It is fit for nothing, but to burn.—Why so? This little figure is droll enough; besides, it is like you.—Oh, Mamma! I have not this nose, I hope.—They have not flattered you in this portrait; but, however, it resembles you.—Thus it is, that *they* paint us who love us not; but unfortunately, though they make us ugly, they do not disfigure us entirely, but maliciously leave some feature by which we may be known.—But, to return to your caricature; Why would you burn it?—Mamma!—Do you know that the only method to defeat such a jest as this, is to appear neither shocked nor embarrassed at it?—If evil-minded people sought to wrong you, or blacken your character, you would have had reason to be afflicted: but this jest does not attack your reputation; and if you have the good sense to be the first to laugh at it, far from setting you in a ludicrous light, it will turn to your advantage, by shewing that you
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are above the childish vanity of being vexed at trifles, and that you will not, by your notice of them, give importance to things beneath the consideration of persons of sense.—Well, Mamma, that is the method I shall observe in future.—I applaud your resolution, as it is a proof of your good sense.—Well then, I am resolved to be vexed at no *ill-natured jests* whatever, that do not attack my *character*.—*Ill-natured jests*.—You look upon *this* jest then in that light.—Certainly; for it has given me uneasiness.—That is a good reason indeed! But, however, what you call an ill-natured jest, because you are the object of it, is in truth nothing more than a little raillery, a joke by no means so severe as that you formerly put upon Miss *Bridget*, when you stuck up in your chamber a profile of the Emperor *Vespasian*; for *there* the whole ridicule fell upon the person, not the dress of Miss *Bridget*——Oh, Mamma! what an old story have you brought up!—If what *then* passed had entirely cured you, I should not have mentioned it. It taught you indeed to respect your friends; but it has not corrected your satirical turn. No longer ago than yesterday, that ridiculous description you gave Miss *Bridget* of the Genoese ladies——I protest, Mamma, I now abhor raillery; and you shall never see me fall again into that low and despicable fault.——Well, I believe you. Let us say no more about it.—I expect company to dinner; let us go and receive them.—I will bring my portrait, and shew it to every body.—Very well! Come, then. . . . She entered the room with an easy air, holding the *Bambolina Francese* in her hand, and
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told our morning's adventure and our conversations at the print-shop with a good grace. The whole company, prepared by M. *d'Almaine*, commended very much the manner in which she took the jest; and *Adelaide*, charmed with her success, has had the drawing framed, to hang it up in the saloon. So that now I am sure of two things; that she will take a jest with good-humour, and never make a severe one. Adieu, my dear friend; I am already two hundred and seventy-four leagues from you and Madame *d'Ostalis*, and am still going farther from you. How afflicting is this calculation!—I confess, three months before my departure, I never thought on my journey but with delight; and now my heart is much oppressed, when I think on the distance that separates us! How much does the imagination seduce and deceive us! True and solid pleasures are those of the heart; such, for example, as I shall feel at my return.

LETTER XL.

The Baron to M. d'Aimeri.

Genoa.

YOU have at last decisively broken the treaty of marriage proposed by Madame *d'Olcy*. I cannot say, that I am sorry for it; for I still adhere

adhere to the project, which I have communicated to you. Let us now come to particulars, with regard to the Chevalier *de Valmont*; and let us see how we can preserve him from some of the dangers, which will surround him this winter. I have already said, if he quits you, he is lost; if you follow him against his will, you will be of no service to him. Confidence is your only tie upon him. A young man naturally well disposed, ought to feel that kind of attachment to a person, whose wisdom and experience he is acquainted with; of whom he thinks himself beloved, and whom he has been accustomed from his infancy to consult. And yet very few fathers, very few preceptors, know how to inspire this confidence into their sons and pupils. I have sought the reason, and believe I have found it. There are two sorts of confidence: the one founded on esteem, and the necessity of sometimes consulting, in matters of importance, a person more knowing and experienced than oneself: the other comes from the heart, and from a conformity of opinions and sentiments. This kind of confidence we repose in a man disinterestedly, and without having need of his advice; we find an inexpressible pleasure in talking with him of whatever is uppermost in our thoughts, of whatever amuses us; in telling him the little secret of the moment, and in throwing off all disguise before him, and appearing what we really are. The first sort of confidence is more flattering; the second more engaging. The one without the other always leaves friendship feeble and imperfect; but both of them united form those deep

deep and durable attachments, which nothing can destroy, and of which so few examples are to be found. It is not often that a person loves to talk of his feelings, his pleasures, his occupations, except to one who seems to interest himself in the detail. If you never listen to your son with attention, but when he asks your advice, he will have no other confidence in you, than such as we repose in a steward, or a lawyer whom we consult. Persuade your son, therefore, that his conversation is always interesting to you, and he will prefer your company to any other. Different ages will necessarily be different in taste, and see things in different lights : but this is the very thing that must be concealed. When *Theodore*, even in his childhood, talked to me for hours together of his cart, his playthings, or his garden, he was persuaded that his conversation was infinitely interesting to me ; and finding nobody but me, who could listen to him so long without being tired, his most agreeable recreation, his greatest pleasure, was to amuse himself tête à tête with me. If any one came in upon us, this charming conversation was disturbed ; for we both of us knew, that the things we were so fond of talking about, were interesting to nobody but ourselves. But when we were interrupted, I failed not to let him know by a significant nod or whisper, how much the interruption was impertinent and disagreeable to me. I have hitherto constantly followed this method ; and the fruits I reap from it, the intimate confidence *Theodore* reposes in me, makes ample amends for the trouble it has sometimes caused me. I am certain that
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my son will never have more confidence in any one than in me. Accustomed from his infancy to conceal nothing from me, but to open his whole heart to me, it is now become necessary to him. Brought up by me from the cradle, he has no opinions, no principles, but what I have given him. Consequently we shall always have a great conformity of character, we shall have the same manner of judging, and shall see things in the same light. Our taste alone will be different, but *Theodore* shall not perceive this. I love solitude; but I shall follow him into the world, and appear to amuse myself there. If I go with him to an horse-race, I shall seem to interest myself for *Glow-worm*, or *King Pepin*. In short, I shall always endeavour to persuade him, that I participate and relish his pleasures as long as they are innocent and reasonable.—This is the way I advise you to follow with the *Chevalier de Valmont*. Consider, that austerity startles youth, and keeps them aloof from us; and that we cannot allure them back, but by appearing to think them agreeable; consider also, that we justly render ourselves insupportable, when we censure their innocent actions.

In my former letter I entered into a detail of the method I thought necessary to be taken to guard him from the epidemical passion for play. I am now to speak of a danger perhaps still greater. Next winter his heart will be disengaged: and what will become of an heart naturally so tender? He admires talents, and he is fond of the theatres. You are sensible, whether that taste leads most of our young men. The *Chevalier de Valmont* is decent and de-

licate; and errors of this sort will in him be but of short duration; but how short soever they may be, they always leave bad impressions. Besides, should your son escape this rock, how will he defend himself from a propensity, of which he has hitherto felt only the pains, and of which he longs to taste the pleasures? I see but one means to secure him from it; it is to offer to his imagination an object, to which he may direct his vows, his desires, and his hopes. He thinks *Adelaide* amiable; he seems convinced she will make the man happy, who shall be destined for her: she is still too young to create a passion: but an imagination of nineteen may easily represent to itself an idea of what she will be two years hence. Besides, the Chevalier *de Valmont* has a real affection for Madame *d'Almaine*; and surely he will not be insensible to the prospect of being so nearly allied to her, and of being adopted into a family he has known from his infancy. In short, even with regard to interest, he cannot find a better match; for, since he resolves to marry a person of quality, he cannot find one, in whom more advantages are centered: so that I have no doubt but our project will be conformable to his inclinations. Conceal from him the conditional promises we have made to each other; but acquaint him with part of the truth: tell him, from your knowledge of my character you are certain, were his conduct irreproachable, I should prefer him to any other. But, for his own sake, he ought not soon to know that in reality I design my daughter for him. The good one is sure to obtain, soon ceases to appear in an advantageous point

point of view. *Certainty* will cool his ardour; but *hope* will make him enterprising, and enable him, if necessary, to undergo the most difficult trials. But if his imagination be inflamed, if that sentiment encouraged by you becomes a passion, never fear that he will lose himself, that he will stray from you; you will become his friend, and his confidant; all your advice will be attended to and followed. In short, you risk nothing in inspiring him with a passionate attachment to my daughter. If he truly loves her, he will obtain her; for he will learn to deserve her. Adieu, Sir; I shall stay six weeks longer here, after which I shall go to Venice, where I intend to pass the winter.

L E T T E R XLI.

The Baronefs to the Viscountess.

Genoa.

TO-MORROW we leave Genoa, and we do it with pleasure; for we have, all of us, a great desire to see Venice. Genoa is a fine city; but it is seen with admiration, and quitted without regret; because there are no charms in its society to attach one to it. Luxury *here* affords no agreeable enjoyments: it consists in mere outside shew; and displays itself only to dazzle, to astonish the stranger, and to attract

his eyes as he passes.—Genoa is adorned with sumptuous palaces, superb marble colonades, and immense galleries of pictures; but the rooms of these vast houses are very inconveniently disposed. You must ascend a very steep stair-case, and always seventy or eighty steps at least, before you reach the best apartments. On the days of assembly, these palaces are lighted up with an extreme magnificence. For instance, one lustre commonly holds one hundred and twenty or one hundred and thirty wax-lights.—The Genoese see company perhaps four or five times in a year, and then receive two hundred persons. They give * magnificent entertainments, but never little † social repasts.—Curiosity led me yesterday to a masked ball. Never did I see any thing more dull and more silent. The dancers are obliged to dance in turn minuets for half an hour; and then English country-dances for half an hour; and lastly, Genoese dances for half an hour; these last are exceedingly slow and ‡ lifeless. After the Genoese, the minuets recommence; and so on for ever in the same order. I am persuaded that the French alone know how to amuse themselves. Upon the whole, *Adelaide* and *Theodore* are very well pleased with their stay at Genoa; they carry away with them a superb collection of designs, and each of them a very pretty journal. *Adelaide* would have torn some pages of hers, at which I had laughed a little; but I would not permit her; and, according to my

* Des fêtes.

† Des petits soupers.

‡ Monotone.

promise,

promise, you shall see it without correction or retrenchments. Adieu, my dear friend. I hope to find a letter from you at Venice; and for my part, on my arrival there, my first occupation shall be to write to you.

L E T T E R X L I I .

The Viscountess to the Baronefs.

Paris.

WOULD you believe, my dear friend, that I received but the other day, that is four months after the date, your journal of *La Corniche*, and the history of the *Duchess de C——*? The man whom you charged with the packet, fell ill on the road, and arrived at Paris only last Thursday.

I shut myself up with Madame *d'Ostalis* and the Chevalier *d'Herbain*, in the little closet you know; and there we read, with inexpressible pleasure, that terrible and affecting story. The Chevalier *d'Herbain* says, the *Duke de C——* is like *Blue beard*; but notwithstanding this piece of wit, he wept as much as we. He thinks the *Duchess* has painted the various emotions she felt in her very extraordinary situations, with a truth that carries conviction along with it.—Oh! what a monster of an husband!—Shall we now complain of ours!—Shall we think much

of any little contradictions that may fall out, after such an example of patience, resignation, and courage!—I feel myself humbled in thinking, how far I am from that degree of human perfection! Oh! surely I should have gone mad in that vault; I should have died, or rather, I should never have entered it; for I should have told all; I should have declared every thing.—At least I fear I should.—I am not very well pleased with the Count *de Belmire*. I can very well conceive why the Duchess, coming out of the cavern, should not love him. Nine years of such confinement might well cool her passions; but her lover ought ever to have adored her; he, who had neither fasted, nor laid upon straw! He is to blame not to love her still.—To become all at once the son-in-law of his mistress, is a strange thing. I can excuse him, however, if the Countess *de Belmire* perfectly resembles her mother. You will let me know how this is, when you come to Rome; and pray be very circumstantial.

I have nothing new to tell you in regard to my situation. By turns I am tired, and I amuse myself; I grieve, and am comforted; I cry, and I laugh; things go on in the old train. To kill time I have taken a physician. He neither cures my headachs, nor my nervous complaints; yet I am mighty fond of him. This appears to me so singular, that I have given myself the trouble to reflect upon it; and I have discovered, when one is not sick, and has that sort of affection for a physician, that the sentiment arises from the same cause which most commonly occasions our taking a lover. *M. de Rochefoucault* says,

says, *What prevents lovers and their mistresses from being weary of being alone, is because they always talk of themselves.* A physician then is much more amusing, and much more amiable than a lover; for he never talks of himself, and he listens to you continually with an air of concern, and with the greatest attention. This is, no doubt, the reason I am so fond of mine, and I shall keep him till you return. When *you* are here, I shall have no need of him; for I feel, that I shall with the greatest sincerity prefer the pleasure of listening to you, to the vanity of talking of myself.

The son of *M. de Blefac* is, after all, going to be married; his bride, *Mademoiselle de R—*, is the most charming little creature you ever saw. She has been brought up by an old aunt, in a secluded castle in the country. She knows nothing, no not how to make a curtsy. She has seen nothing; but she has as much natural wit, as a girl of fifteen and an half can have. Her awkwardness is full of grace, and she is beautiful as the day. Since the death of her old aunt, she has been three months in a convent here, and to-morrow she leaves it to be married. As her mother-in-law goes no more to court, and as *M. de Limours* is pretty nearly related to *M. de Blefac*, I shall present her. I have been to see her several times; she astonishes me. Her candour, temper, and frankness make her both interesting and poignant. She has an excellent heart; and still laments her old aunt, though she confesses she was something of a scold; and she is in despair at quitting her convent, because she has strongly attached herself to a nun, to

whom her guardian had particularly recommended her. She is tender and ingenuous; has no idea of any thing; she is not sixteen, and is going to launch into the world. Poor thing!

A-propos of *innocence*: *Constantia* took it into her head the other day to ask me, what a lover was. The question embarrassed me, and I believe I did not make her a very good answer: but what is one to do in such a case? Must one make a silly answer, or say something *pretty near the truth*?—I know not; pray inform me. The Chevalier *de Herbain*, to whom I shew your journals, tells me you will yet find very dangerous roads from Venice to Rome. Now *Adelaide* is *familiarised with precipices*, if you can avoid them, you will do me a pleasure. I am afraid in a carriage on the road to Versailles; judge then what uneasiness you give me. Your journal of *La Corniche* made my hair stand an end; and your passage by sea from Antibes to Nice, and your barbarity in making *Adelaide* sing in the very moment of suffering—All this appeared to me as cruel, and as terrible as the story of the *Duchess de C*——. Adieu, my dear; I will always endeavour to imitate you as much as I am able. But I declare to you, my only voyage with *Constantia* shall be upon the Seine, and the only mountain I shall make her climb, shall be that of *Bons-Hommes*.

LETTER XLIII.

The Baronefs to the Vifcountefs.

Venice.

WHAT a fingular and dull place is Venice! One is aftonifhed on entering it; and you can have no conception of its appearance. A great city in the midft of the fea, all its walls bathed in water, and canals inftead of ftreets! Nothing truly is more extraordinary. In moft of the ftreets, particularly in that where we lodge, there is no paffage between the houfes and the canal; confequently no foot paffengers, no cries in the ftreets, not the leaft noife, for the Gondoliers make none; fo that you might fancy yourfelf in a defart, or in the cavern of the Ducheſs. If you look out of the window, you fee nothing paſs but Gondolas covered with black cloth, which look like coffins; and you have nothing under your eye but dirty water; and old Gothick houfes, blackened by time, preſent you with a moſt woeful and diſagreeable proſpect. Add to this, if you go out of the town to amuſe yourſelf, you are not ſure of getting back again; for it is very poſſible the weather may prevent you. This happened to us, who were obliged to ſleep in an horrible inn at Fuſſina, a ſmall league from Venice, becauſe the bad weather prevented our getting further. This city, nevertheless, is well worth a ſtranger's curioſity. It has not its

fellow in the world, and it affords some very fine buildings, and some excellent pictures.

I am obliged, my dear friend, to own to you *another new work* relative to education. It is upon Mythology; or Poetic History; which I have endeavoured to render more agreeable, and, above all, more decent than those already published.—*Adelaide* had only a general idea of fabulous history; and as for the understanding the pictures and ancient monuments, of which Italy is full, it is necessary to know it as perfectly as the Roman history, I have composed this work for her use. I put it into her hands on our arrival at Genoa, and she is now reading it the second time.

How! my dear friend; does *Constantia* already ask what a lover is?—It is early!—For my part, I think one should not, in these cases, give a foolish answer; *you* can follow this advice better than any one. Say something, then, *pretty near the truth*. Innocence and ignorance are two things very different, and yet they are often confounded. *One* is the most alluring charm that can embellish youth, the *other* does not embellish, and cannot but be hurtful to it. Let us then leave them no more ignorance than what is necessary to preserve their innocence. It is true, there are questions one cannot answer *pretty near the truth*, without impairing or destroying innocence. I would not lie, nor answer absurdly. What is to be done then? I have long reflected on this difficulty, and have found the way never to be embarrassed with it. *Adelaide* has never been accustomed to believe me obliged *always* to answer all her questions.
On

On the contrary, I have used her to have her curiosity frequently repressed by this answer: *What you ask, is not worth the trouble I must take to explain it to you.*—Or this:—*It is not necessary for you to know this; the explanation of it will be tiresome to you as well as to me.* You see, that in refusing to satisfy her curiosity, I endeavour at the same time to diminish it as much as possible, by assuring her that what she desires to know, has *nothing interesting* in it. So that she never repeats her question, nor seems vexed with my refusal; and I take care to make this answer very often to questions the most indifferent; which gives me an opportunity of doing it without suspicion, when in reality I could not give an explanation. By this means she is never surprised when I will not answer her. She believes I only spare her the trouble of a tiresome detail, and thinks no more of it. Besides, she is so occupied, her life is so active, and all her time so filled up, that there is scarce a possibility of her dwelling on dangerous objects. When her reason advances, she will find, no doubt, there are things which are mysteries to her; but she will at the same time feel, that she ought to be ignorant of them; for I am sure the purity of her mind and her modesty will guard her innocence. Adieu, my dear friend; I am called upon to go to *St. Mark's Place*. I will write to you again after to-morrow; for this letter is too short for me.

LETTER XLIV.

Madame d'Ostalis to the Baronefs.

Paris.

MADAME *de Limours* is very unhappy at this instant, my dear aunt. Her daughter and her son-in-law vex her cruelly. *M. de Valcy* lost the other day eight thousand Louis. This news getting abroad, his creditors and those of *Madame de Valcy* went to *M. de Limours*; and in short, debts have come out to the amount of twenty thousand pounds, contracted in four or five years. *M. de Valcy* is sent to his regiment for a year; and they are about selling one of his estates. *M. de Limours* has paid all his daughter's debts, which amount to thirty-six thousand pounds. She shews great gratitude to her father, and seems to love him passionately: but behaves to her mother in such a manner, as to bring into doubt the grateful sentiment she professes. She is entirely estranged from *Madame de Limours*; and though she lives in the same house, scarce sees her for a quarter of an hour in a day; and, in short, has no society but that of *Madame de Gerville*. You know, doubtless, that she is breeding; but she does not seem to partake in the joy, which so desired an event has given her father and her husband's family. She must have a soul of a different stamp, before she can feel the happiness of having children.

M. d'Aimeri

M. *d'Aimeri* came not to town till late in the last month; having been six weeks in *Languedoc*. Since the return of the Chevalier *de Valmont*, Madame *de Valcy* has often supped at his mother's; which has been remarked. I was there one evening, and I observed them with all the attention I was able.—Madame *de Valcy* seems to me still to pursue her point. So much perseverance merits some success; and I believe the *virtue* of the Chevalier is in a tottering condition.—I think M. *d'Aimeri* follows him too openly; he has an air of severity which gives me pain. Fear is sometimes a powerful restraint; but it is always a precarious one. Tyranny gives occasion to great revolutions; and I very much fear, an approaching revolution will soon ravish from M. *d'Aimeri*, at least for a season, the power he abuses.

You have heard of the marriage of Count *Anatolle*, the son of M. *de Blesac*; his wife is really charming, upon all accounts. Madame *de Valcy* says, she resembles *Ninette a la Cour*, which is not ill imagined; for she has ingenuity and ignorance, grace and awkwardness; but at the same time it is impossible at the age of sixteen to have more wit, to be less taken up with the prettiest person in the world, and to shew a better disposition. Her relations seem to me not to know her value. Her father-in-law laughs at her; Madame *de Blesac* feels deeply her want of breeding, and scolds her perpetually; her husband looks upon her as a child, and shews an indifference towards her, nearly approaching to contempt. All this must turn out ill.—What a pity!

Adieu,

Adieu, my dear aunt; eight months are already elapsed; and ten more!—What a long while! You have promised me you will never travel again.—Alas! if, as you say, I have no longer occasion for a guide, have I not still need of a friend, whose place in my heart nobody can supply?

LETTER XLV.

M. d'Aimeri to the Baron.

Paris.

I Promised to be sincere, and I keep my promise; but remember, Sir, you promised likewise to excuse some *short errors*.—You shall know all. Depend upon it, I will be ingenuous with you; and indeed you ought to depend upon it: for friendship, gratitude, probity, all equally lay me under the obligation of concealing nothing from you.

As you had foreseen, four months absence has absolutely obliterated the inclination of my grandson for Madame d'Ostalis. He saw her again, not indeed without some confusion and some pleasure; but, being destitute of hope, he is also void of passion. I then observed his looks and attentions turn towards Madame de Valcy, who, making the same observation, has played off every art in the science of coquetry
to

to seduce him. One evening, as we returned from supping with her, the Chevalier expressed a very great desire to go to the ball at the Opera House. I answered, I would carry him thither some other time; he said no more, and I went to bed. His chamber is next to mine, separated only by an anti-chamber, which opens to the stair-case. About an hour and an half after I had been in bed, hearing somebody stirring in his room, I called *Placide*, his old valet-de-chambre, whom you know. When he came, I asked if his master was in bed.—Ah! good God! is he not with you?—What then can be become of him?—These words made me tremble, and *Placide* informed me, that my grandson had gone out of his chamber, saying, he was going into mine, and advised him to go to sleep, for he had many things to say to me, and the conversation might last a long time. Whilst *Placide* was giving this account, I dressed in haste, and ran into the anti-chamber. The door that leads to the stair case was fastened; but I found the window open, and perceived that my grandson, at the peril of his life, had escaped by the leads, (which are excessively narrow, and in some places without ledges) and in that manner had got into the next house, where, no doubt, he had maintained some correspondence: and I was not deceived in any of these conjectures. I called up all my people; I made them search all the leads; and I myself went into the street; and after having satisfied myself, that at least he had escaped without accident, I returned to my chamber to reflect on what was to be done; and after much uncertainty,

tainty, I determined to wait his return. I fixed myself in my armed chair, and in that manner passed the whole night, which, you may well imagine, must have appeared long to me. When day appeared, I opened the window, and shuddered at the sight of those leads, over which my grandson had passed; with precipitation, no doubt, and in a very dark night.—At last, about seven o'clock, a Savoyard brought me a letter. I knew the hand of my grandson, and read as follows:

“ I dare not appear before the eyes of a father, whom I respect and love. I am forced to avoid him, and conceal myself. I fear all the weight of his anger; and yet, what is my crime?—The having, *at nineteen years old*, gone *alone* to a ball.—Permit me, Sir, to say, if you had deigned to have allowed me half the liberty, which I see all the men of my age enjoy every day, I should never have concealed from you the least of my proceedings.

“ Will you permit me to come and ask your pardon?—There is nothing I will not do to obtain it.”

When I had read this note, I wrote in my turn, and sent this answer.

“ Whilst *you* were at the ball, your father, seventy years old, was in the streets, covered with snow, half naked, and agitated with the most fearful uneasiness. He was examining whether his son, his only hope, had not broken his neck in escaping from his paternal mansion!—Whilst *you* were at the ball, your father was watching alone in his chamber, counting every hour, groaning in a state of
“ desertion,

“ desertion, and thinking of nothing but the
 “ *ingrate*, who abandons and forgets *him*! —
 “ You ask, what are your crimes; they are
 “ these — O, *Charles*! thou knowest *mine*,
 “ and the remorse which overwhelms me.
 “ Thou knowest, if the unfortunate *Cecilia* be
 “ not ever present to my thoughts! — Wilt *thou*
 “ turn out a fatal instrument of the divine dis-
 “ pleasure towards me? — Ah! my son, cruel
 “ as such a destiny would be to me, I would
 “ submit to it, if thou couldst punish *me* with-
 “ out ruining *thyself*.”

A quarter of an hour after I had dispatched
 this answer, my door opened hastily, and *Charles*
 appeared, pale, out of breath, and with his face
 bathed in tears. He sprang towards me, and
 threw himself at my feet. After a long pause,
 caused by our mutual relentings, he broke silence,
 and made me the most affecting protestations
 of repentance and tenderness, mixed, however,
 with some artful and guarded complaints for
 the little liberty I had hitherto permitted him
 to enjoy. It is true, replied I, I had flattered
 myself, after having consecrated the remainder
 of my life to your service, you would have suf-
 fered yourself to have been guided by me, at
 least for a year or two, after your appearance in
 the world. — All the young men of your age
 enjoy, you say, an entire independence. But
 observe, what are they? — I wished you other
 sort of enjoyments. — I was preparing for you
 an happier lot. — Ah, *Charles*! had you se-
 conded my views for you, what a felicity might
 you have pretended to! — Here I stopped; and
 seeing in my grandson's eyes an eager curiosity;
 I have

I have hitherto, continued I, deferred acquainting you with a project, I have much at heart : I waited till you should, as formerly, seek my company, and wish to be alone with me, that I might have an opportunity of communicating it to you. But for three months past you take every occasion to avoid me. In the evening, when we return home, you seem sleepy ; you hear me without attention ; and you never talk to me but upon indifferent subjects.—And may I not now know this secret ?—Without hesitation, I then entered into the particulars, which you advised me to acquaint him with — At the name of *Adelaide* he blushed, and I observed a visible emotion in his countenance ; and he asked her age. She is now thirteen, replied I, and when she returns from Italy, she will be fourteen, and will then no longer be a child ; her talents will be greatly improved ; and her person will certainly eclipse hers, whom you now think so charming. You will then be in love with her—and perhaps it may then be too late : for if you are not worthy of her, your passion will be vain. In fine, speak ; what are your sentiments on the subject ? Do you desire this project to be realised ?—Yes, earnestly. And I will confess, thinking that Mademoiselle *d'Almaine* would one day have the charms, the talents, and the virtues of Madame *d'Ostalis*, this very idea has more than once presented itself to my imagination. Besides, even in Languedoc, in my early youth, I felt an extraordinary interest in the charming little *Adelaide* ; especially since the day she swooned away, when *Theodore* inadvertently untied the bandage of
Madame

Madame *d'Almaine's* arm. That picture will never be effaced from my memory.—So then, *your* sentiments, I find, agree with *mine*: but do you think, Madame *d'Almaine* would chuse for her son-in-law a young man, thoughtless, insignificant, immoral; or even one of moderate attainments?—My conduct hitherto has no reason to make me despair.—Harkee, *Charles*; one may confess one's own weakness, without divulging that of another person. A man of honour ought to have a regard for a lady's character, though she has none herself. I do not therefore ask *your* secret; I have told you *mine*; reflect upon it. An error of a few hours may be overlooked; but if you are capable of forming a permanent connection with a despicable woman, whose indecent advances ought to have inspired nothing but disgust; that Madame *d'Almaine*, prejudiced in your favour, should not be deceived in your character, and persist in the good intentions I suppose her to have towards you, I myself will be the first to acquaint her with your irregularities. But she is too well informed, to lay me under the obligation of accusing you myself. If she has the views, I suppose her to have, I do not doubt but she will be instructed, in Italy, of your conduct here; and that from Rome and Naples she will have an eye upon you. Be consistent, that is all I ask of you. If you really feel all the advantages of so desirable an establishment, conduct yourself in such a manner as to be worthy to aspire after it. This conversation has done wonders. *Charles*, repentant, grateful, and docile, has voluntarily thrown himself wholly into my hands.

hands. He consented to set out the very next day for Picardy, where we passed a week, and returned the day before yesterday. We have heard that Madame *de Valcy* has miscarried, and, it is pretended, through her own fault, by going to the ball at the Opera House one night, when there was an excessive croud. My grandson has received two or three notes from her, which he has not shewn me. I fancy, I am but roughly handled in them; and that *Charles*, on his part, accuses me, without scruple, of tyranny in his answers, and throws the whole blame of his conduct on me. But, in truth, his heart has no share in this intrigue: he speaks of *Adelaide* with extreme pleasure; the hopes of being one day allied to you, wholly possess him; and I am very sure *that* idea will produce all the salutary effects we expected from it — Adieu, Sir; let me have your thoughts on all these particulars; continue to give me your advice, and address your letters to me at Paris; for I shall not leave it till towards the end of May.

LETTER XLVI.

The Count de Roseville to the Baron.

I AM now arrived at that dangerous period, at which the preceptor should redouble his care and vigilance, if he would not run the risk of losing all his labour ! My pupil is but fifteen and a half, and he is in love. I have long foreseen that his passions would be strong, and would shew themselves early ; but he has a command over himself ; he has a friendship for me ; and his young heart is already filled with the love of glory.

You have not surely forgot *Alexis Stezen* and his daughter, the young and charming *Stolina*, to whom the Prince formerly gave his * pellise ; we saw her again two years ago, and I thought her so handsome, that I resolved with myself to make no more visits to *Alexis Stezen*. But notwithstanding her retreat and obscurity, *Stolina* is but too well known by her charms. Her mother, two months since, coming to town to consult a physician, brought *Stolina* with her. The physician's son-in-law, an excellent painter, saw her, and drew her picture clandestinely, without either the mother or daughter perceiving the theft ; and a fortnight after *Stolina's* picture was to be sold at all the toy-shops. The Prince was soon apprised of it ; and from that moment was

* A cloak lined with fur.

very

very curious to inspect all the shew-boxes that were brought him. At length he found what he sought; he met with the portrait of *Stolina*; he knew it in an instant, and examined it with much attention and disorder. The day after, going through a long gallery leading to the apartment of the Princess his mother, he stopped at a jeweller's shop, telling me his watch was out of order, and that he would have another. I thought he only wanted to see if the portrait of *Stolina* were in that shop, and endeavoured to engage him to pursue his way, by offering him my watch. He answered he had a mind to buy one; and at the same time, without looking into the shew-glasses, he asked to see some watches; the jeweller offered him one; he took it hastily, and walked on. As we were going, he gave it me to look at; I examined it on all sides, and returned it him again, without being able to comprehend his design; not doubting, at the same time, but his sudden desire of having a new watch proceeded from some secret cause, of which I was ignorant: at night I observed the Prince put his new watch at his bed's-head; I had a great desire to take it for a quarter of an hour, while he was asleep, but the fear of waking him prevented me. The next day and the day following he wore the same watch, and I thought I could perceive some slight signs of a secret intelligence between him and Count *Stralzi*. Being willing to get farther information, I behaved in such a manner as to persuade him I had no distrust, reckoning that a perfect security would put him off his guard. In short, a few days convinced me of what I had
had

had at first but a vague suspicion of. I eagerly wished for an explanation; but felt how much I risked in being hasty, and in taking an improper time. If I obtained not a sincere confession; if the Prince, already in a course of dissimulation with me, could resolve to tell me a determined untruth, all was lost: I resolved then to wait a favourable opportunity; and chance very soon offered me such a one as I had wished.

One of the great lords of the court is just dead: the places he possessed were asked for, even during his illness. All his spoils are already dispersed and given away, except one dignity he was invested with, and which the sovereign destined for me, though I had by no means solicited it—One morning the young Prince and I were tête-à-tête, and he was communicating to me his reflections on *Telemachus*, which he is now reading the second time; I stopt him in the midst of it; and why do you not mention, says I, the isle of *Calypso*, and the growing passion of young *Telemachus* for *Eucharis*?—At that question he blushed, and cast down his eyes: I confess to you, replied he, *that* episode is not the part of the work I like best.—At the first reading, however, you were very much pleased with it; you admired the penetration and firmness of Mentor.—Upon second thoughts, I find his conduct too rigorous and too authoritative.—I understand you; you do not approve his pushing *Telamachus* headlong into the sea!—True; I think the pupil of *wisdom* should have been persuaded by reason, not subdued by force—As he finished these words, a note was brought him from the Prince his father. He opened it eagerly,

ly, and, after reading it, embraced me, and informed me that the Prince had granted me the favour I just now mentioned. I kept silence a moment, and then said, I am sensible of the joy this news seems to cause in you : but I am not desirous of this favour ; it may make some other man happy ; and therefore shall not accept of it. — Why so ? — Do not imagine, Sir, that money, places, or honours, can repay the cares I have consecrated to you. Neither the state, nor the Prince your father, can recompense me ; you alone are bound to pay that debt ; and you have acquitted it hitherto, as far as you are able to do it ; I am satisfied, and I ought to be so. If you had exhibited a common genius only, I should, perhaps, seek these vain honours, which I now disdain : but how can so frivolous an ambition seduce me, when your virtues promise me such brilliant and solid glory ? — Oh, my friend ! interrupted the Prince, taking my hand, and pressing it affectionately between his own, my friend ! how can I acknowledge so real and so disinterested an attachment ? — By conducting yourself, replied I, as you have hitherto done, by loving me, and by letting me always read your noble and grateful heart, which never has concealed any thing from me. — This is my real recompence, and, I dare say so, one of your most sacred duties. — Ah ! this is too much, cried he, melting into tears, I can no longer resist the remorse which oppresses me. — At these words I affected the greatest surprise. He threw himself into my arms, and I pressed him to my bosom. — Ah ! said he to me, I ought to throw myself at your feet. You ! my friend, my guide, my father !

father! I have deceived you. I am infatuated, but I am not ungrateful. You shall know all—I am ready to obey you—to sacrifice every thing to you.

Put yourself a moment in my place, my dear Baron, and figure to yourself the joy, the transports, which so much candour, so much generosity, must have caused in me!—Oh! cried I, nothing is now wanting to my happiness, but to see *you* feel, as I do, the whole value of this conduct. Ah! I allow you to be proud of it; since it fills up the measure of my felicity, by justifying all the tenderness I have for you!—These words caused the most sincere satisfaction to take place of grief and remorse in the Prince's breast;—he sat down by me, and after a moment's silence, drew out his new watch, and giving it me, blushing;—Know then, says he, my faults and my folly; that watch has a portrait in it.—A portrait?—He then shewed me the secret spring, and I opened it. Well, resumed he, Do you know that figure?—It is *Eucharis*.—Ah! the comparison is weak: *Telemachus's* was a recent passion; he did not love *Eucharis* from his infancy.—But tell me, Sir, how happened it that, seeming to take a watch by chance, this very individual one should fall into your hands? The jeweller was certainly prepared, and consequently you must have had some confidant in this business.—That is true: I had confessed to *some one* a very earnest desire to have this portrait, and that I dared not ask you for it: two days afterwards I was told I should find it in that shop I stopped at, and that it would be enclosed in the watch which the

master should have in his hand.—And what opinion have you of the person who has done you such a piece of service?—Don't ask me his name; it is the only thing I cannot possibly tell you.—You will give me your word, then, that it is not one of your own people, for I would not suppose that any person, concerned in your education, could be capable of so base an action.—It is a person who does not belong to me.—And one who, I am now sure, will never be your friend: but let us drop the subject: I am now under no uneasiness about your future conduct; having restored me your *confidence*, you will not reject my *advice*.—Alas! what do you require of me?—Promise me to renounce an inclination which will dishonour you, if you have the weakness to yield to it.—Which will *dishonour* me!—Yes, Sir, dishonour you. There have been princes, I know, whose brilliant actions have rendered such errors excusable; but you! what have *you* done to excuse your want of *morals*, and your yielding *basely* to a passion, from which a prince ought, above all things, to guard himself? Besides, what is the object which inspires so criminal a passion? A young person raised by you from the depth of misery, who owes her all to your bounty! What! from a benefactor, from a protector of innocence, will you become a vile and base seducer? Will you lose all the merit of the first good action you have ever done; of that very action, which then gave you so much satisfaction, and made me so happy? No, Sir, I am very certain, the slightest reflection will soon cure you of an inclination which will debase you.—I will promise you to do nothing
without,

without, at least, acquainting you with it.—I ask no more; I am satisfied: but what will you do with this watch? I imagine you will be so good as to give it me.—I consent, but on one condition; it is, that you leave *Alexis Stezen* and his family in the house they occupy on the Lake —. — Ah! of what consequence is that to you?—Why, their habitation is very agreeable to them; I would not have their peace disturbed by my means; besides, *Stolina* is ignorant of my sentiments towards her.—Well, I promise you to take no step in this affair without acquainting you.—So, that is sufficient; *Alexis Stezen* will remain on the banks of the Lake. . . . I easily perceived the real fear of the Prince was, lest *Stolina* should be sent away to some distant province; nevertheless, after the ingenuous confession he had just made, I could not refuse promising what he asked; I was unwilling to discover my fears to him; for every thing that looks like diffidence, mortally wounds a generous heart. But you may well imagine, that in less than a year *Stolina* shall be well portioned, and advantageously married. With regard to Count *Stralzi*, I have found means to remove him, for some time at least. Young *Saltzback* is returned from the expedition he made, by the Prince's order, into all the provinces of this country; and has brought back with him memoirs very well composed, and, I believe, very faithful. The Prince, by my advice, has just given the same commission to Count *Stralzi*, who, thinking himself the first employed in it, has accepted it with great pleasure. He set off yesterday, and is to return in six months: I will

then inform you what use I intend to make of all this, since my young Prince so much interests you, as to make you earnestly desirous of being acquainted with all particulars relating to him. Adieu, my dear Baron! Let me know your route exactly.

LETTER XLVII.

The Baronefs to the Viscountess.

FROM Rome!—You, who suppose I date with so much pride from Venice, will, I imagine, think me more proud to be able to write from Rome; but happy those who, like you, my dear friend, date always from Auteuil and from Pantin. You cannot conceive to what a degree one loves one's own country, when separated from it far, as I am at present from mine. I meet no Frenchman who does not appear amiable to me: I saw two at Venice, whose company was become necessary to me, and who probably would have tired me at Paris: in short, every thing that recalls France to my mind, is truly interesting to me. But let us return to Rome, since I came thither last night. You may well believe my first care was to send to the daughter of the Duchefs de C—, that Countess de Belmire, whom I so much wished to be acquainted with: prepared by her mother, she came to me, with her husband, that very evening.

ing, and I found in her all the politeness, all the graces, of the Duchess. She is as like her too as you can desire, though not so regular a beauty. I am sorry to tell you, the Count *de Belmire* seems to love her in such a manner, as to make one fear the remembrance of Albenga is not always uppermost in his thoughts; however, he has a melancholy air, and when the Duchess is mentioned, he sighs and is thoughtful. But I was so very much fatigued, that I could not observe and examine him with all the attention necessary to give you a very exact account of him; but I shall dine with him to-day, and in my first letter will fully satisfy your curiosity.—It is true, the journey from Venice to Rome, by Bologna and Loretto, is very fatiguing; the *Colstorito* is a *Corniche* extremely dangerous, being as narrow for a coach as *La Corniche* of Genoa is for a sedan; the mountain, known by the name of * *La Cartiere de Foligno*, is also a passage very frightful, on account of its precipices, five hundred feet perpendicular, which range along the side of the road, almost the whole length of it. We were obliged to do without our women, almost the whole journey; and very often content ourselves with bread and a few stale eggs for our dinner and supper. On these occasions *Adelaide* every instant felicitated herself on her abstemiousness, on her not being delicate, and on her having accustomed herself, for a year past, to undress

* So called from the *paper-works* in its neighbourhood. These mountains afford admirable prospects, natural cascades, springs, torrents, &c.

herself

herself and go to bed without the assistance of her woman.

Yes, no doubt, my dear friend, I did not enter Rome with indifference; nay, not without emotion. Rome! that famous city, the country of so many illustrious persons, and, for so long a time, the sovereign of the universe! —But I am wholly taken up with a sentiment, too deeply rooted and too habitual, to permit me to receive very lively impressions from any other objects. Wholly employed in looking into, and reading the deepest recesses of the hearts of *Theodore* and *Adelaide*, that occupation absorbs me entirely; so that I have but a faint and confused idea even of my own sensations, when at the same time I could give you an account of whatever *Adelaide* felt on entering Genoa, Venice, and Rome, and of what she felt and thought in admiring the different pictures we have hitherto seen.

I cannot finish this letter without communicating to you an idea, which is originally your own: you know, in talking on education, we have long agreed, that experience is absolutely necessary to the preceptor and to the mother of a family; that we ought to have made children our study, to be enabled to bring them up well, and consequently ought to have educated more than one. I have a letter of yours by me, of an old date, on this subject; in which you say that, according to this principle, the younger daughters will be better educated than the elder; adding, this is a very affecting circumstance for the elder; and you exhort me to seek a remedy for this inconvenience. I have sought long
without

without success, for very often the simplest ideas (almost always the best) are the last which present themselves, because one often rejects and disdains to attend to them; but at last I have been obliged to have recourse to them, and have found what you required of me. I have arranged my plan, and am now about to put it in execution.

This morning, in the presence of *Adelaide*, I desired *Dainville*, who is of this country, to look me out a very poor family; adding, I would take one of the daughters, and bring her up to some business. He is to give me an answer in a fortnight; you must be so good as to wait till then. my dear friend, for the explanation of my project; for, till then, I cannot make you perfectly comprehend all the advantages I expect from it. Adieu, my dear friend! Madame *de Ostalis* tells me you are grown astonishingly thin; let me have an account then of your health. Can you entertain me with any thing in which I am more interested?



